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ABSTRACT

A set of cultural awareness exercises is presented for students participating in an international exchange program. The guide includes four sections: pre-departure preparation, group orientation materials, an in-country guide to cultural observation, and a re-entry guide. The first section includes discussion of expectations, cultural values, taking information about one's own family, learning about the target country and language, and the role of skills and attitudes in the exchange process. The second section on group orientation covers awareness of one's own and the target culture, helpful skills, and adaptation to a new culture. The third section, intended for use on the trip abroad, suggests activities on cultural observation, living with a host family, exploring the community, and cultural adaptation and self-awareness. The fourth section, a re-entry guide, contains exercises for evaluating change in oneself, re-adjusting to the home culture, and taking an international perspective on the experience abroad. Appended materials include a field guide to language and cultural awareness and a field guide concerning social and political processes of the United States. (MSE)

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INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE SERIES

GETTING THE WHOLE PICTURE:

A Student's Field Guide to Language Acquisition and Culture Exploration

ED262558

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PREFACE

About the Experiment

International exchanges are on the upswing. More and more young Americans travel abroad each year often under the sponsorship of a school or university program, if not under the aegis of an exchange organization. The Experiment in International Living is one such international exchange organization. More than 50 years old, it was founded in 1932 when 23 young people sailed to Europe under the direction of founder, Dr. Donald B. Watt. From his experiences, Dr. Watt developed a program centered around the homestay.

The Experiment has long since recognized that immersion in the language and culture of another country provides an important and meaningful experience. Living with a host family offers an opportunity to understand other people by learning about their culture, whereas learning their language helps to understand them on their own terms.

About the President's International Youth Exchange Initiative

In May, 1982, a major international initiative was taken when several countries signed an agreement at Versailles for the purpose of expanding exchanges of young people between the United States and France, The United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, Germany and Japan. Since then many more countries have joined this initiative and more will certainly follow.

Aside from increasing the number of exchange participants, we are concerned with improving educational aspects. Our hope is to strengthen the entire educational exchange field through wide sharing of orientation models, methods and materials. This guide is one attempt to enhance the education dimension of the international exchange experience.

Alvino E. Fantini, Ph.D.
Director,
Orientation Development Project

WHAT IT'S

WHAT

There are 4 parts to this Field Guide:

I. Looking Around (Pre-Departure Preparation)
II. Focusing (Group Orientation)
III. Getting the Picture (In-Country)
IV. Further Developments (Returning Home)

WHY

Each part should help you make the most of your intercultural experience by learning about the relationship between yourself and your culture and your host family and their culture and language.

WHERE

You receive Part I at home upon acceptance to the exchange program.

Parts II and III are given to you at your place of orientation.

Part IV is given at the end of the program.

You may decide to carry only Part III with you on your trip. However, all four parts are interrelated and may be kept together in a binder upon your return home.

ALL ABOUT

WHO

You can use the Guide alone, but most sections can also be done with other people:

- your own family
- your leader
- other group members
- your host family
- members of your host community

WHEN

This book is not homework. It should not stand between you and a good experience. Rather, it should help to make your experience even better. Don't feel you have to do everything in it. Choose sections that fit your experience. The questions should help you find new ways to explore the host culture.

HOW

There are many ways to use this Guide. You can:

- think about the ideas
- discuss them with others
- write about the ideas
- get information by interviewing another person

Since each person has preferred ways of doing things, you can choose the way you like best. But, always try to use your new language as much as possible.

Part I

LOOKING AROUND

(Pre-Departure Preparation)

The Experiment in International Living
Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

Credits

How Others See Americans, pp. 9-10, was adapted with permission from Newsweek, July 11, 1983.

PART I: Looking Around
(Pre-Departure Preparation)

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A JOURNEY OF 1,000 MILES

• • • BEGINS WITH A SINGLE STEP

WHO AM I?
WHERE DO I COME FROM?
WHERE AM I GOING?
WHAT DO I KNOW?

You may wonder what the first two questions have to do with going to live with a new family in another country with. You're probably more interested in such questions as:

* Will I have a brother or sister my own age?
* Will I like the food?
* Will I understand the language?
* Will I have more or less freedom than I do at home?

It may seem strange that looking at your life in your own country can prepare you for life in another country, yet questions about one apply to the other. In this section you'll look at your past experiences in preparation for your future ones.

WHO AM I?

"In oneself lies the whole world, and if you know how to look and learn, then the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either that key or the door to open except yourself." J.R. Krishnamurti, You Are the World

Going into a new culture is an individual experience. Who you are, what you believe, and why you choose to learn about a new culture and language are all factors which make your experience unique from that of any of the thousands of persons who have entered into another culture. Just as other travelers' impressions have been affected by their own values, beliefs, likes and dislikes--so will your own. By knowing more about yourself, you will be better prepared to understand your reactions to your new language and culture.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT?

What a person considers important is often influenced by personal values and by the values of one's own community. Yet people in other countries may consider different things important. Looking at what you consider important and why will help you compare your values to those held by other people.

What are the most important things in your life?

Make a list on the chart below, ordering them from most to least important.

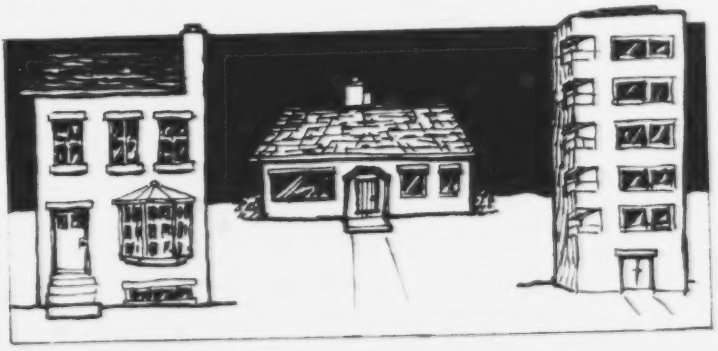
MOST IMPORTANT

LEAST IMPORTANT

What influenced your choices?

3 FAMILIES

Although people from the same country and culture share many common characteristics, the life-styles of families within a culture can still vary greatly. Becoming aware of some of these similarities and differences in your own culture (and how you adjust to them) can help make your homestay more successful.

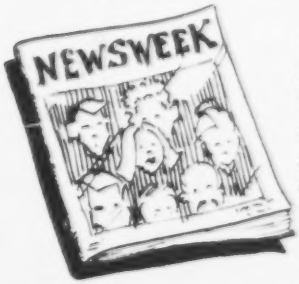


Think of 3 FAMILIES in your home community that you know well. If each of these families decided to host a foreign student what standards of behavior would each expect? In other words, how do the attitudes of these families differ in regard to such issues as religion, politics, dating, responsibilities, etc.? What adjustments would YOU have to make to live with each of these families?

How do you communicate with others? How do you deal with unexpected events and changes? With being expected to do what someone else wishes? How willing are you to try out new things (especially those that could be embarrassing)? Your attitude will help or hinder your discovery of the exciting possibilities of other cultural perspectives.

HOW OTHERS SEE AMERICANS

When you go abroad, you are a representative of your country. The impressions that people have of you as an individual will affect how they see all the people of your country in the future. This tendency to "stereotype," that is, to standardize or oversimplify another culture, is a natural one. It's a way for people to categorize and deal with complex and overwhelming issues. On the next two pages, you'll look at one study that explored some stereotypes of Americans.



In a 1983 survey, Newsweek magazine asked people from 6 countries to look at a list of 14 characteristics and choose which ones they most and least associated with AMERICANS. Here is the list they used.

FRIENDLY	DECISIVE	HONEST
RUDE	SOPHISTICATED	INVENTIVE
INDUSTRIOUS	GREEDY	SEXY
LAZY	ENERGETIC	INTELLIGENT
NATIONALISTIC	SELF-INDULGENT	

Which characteristics would you use to describe yourself? Americans in general?

Which do you think non-Americans used to describe Americans?

TURN THE PAGE TO FIND THE SURVEY RESULTS.

HOW OTHERS SEE AMERICANS

Characteristics **most** often associated with Americans by the populations of:

FRANCE	JAPAN	WEST GERMANY
Industrious	Nationalistic	Energetic
Energetic	Friendly	Inventive
Inventive	Decisive	Friendly
Decisive	Rude	Sophisticated
Friendly	Self-indulgent	Intelligent

GREAT BRITAIN	BRAZIL	MEXICO
Friendly	Intelligent	Industrious
Self-indulgent	Inventive	Intelligent
Energetic	Energetic	Inventive
Industrious	Industrious	Decisive
Nationalistic	Greedy	Greedy

Characteristics **least** often associated with Americans by the same populations:

FRANCE	JAPAN	WEST GERMANY
Lazy	Industrious	Lazy
Rude	Lazy	Sexy
Honest	Honest	Greedy
Sophisticated	Sexy	Rude

GREAT BRITAIN	BRAZIL	MEXICO
Lazy	Lazy	Lazy
Sophisticated	Self-indulgent	Honest
Sexy	Sexy	Rude
Decisive	Sophisticated	Sexy

Reprinted with permission,
Newsweek, July 11, 1983

LANGUAGES ARE:

a) FUN
b) DIFFICULT
c) BORING

"French has become more than a subject taught in school. It's a language spoken by people like me. I've come to value every French word I can understand or say."
Heather Zorn, Experimenter to France, 1983

If you have studied a foreign language before, you probably have opinions about what helps you learn. Look at the following comments about learning a language. Which express ideas similar to yours? Which are most different?

I LEARN A LANGUAGE BEST:

* If I can see it written
* If I first learn the grammar
* If I feel relaxed in the classroom and have a supportive teacher
* If I have an opportunity to practice the language
* If I can imagine myself as a person in that culture
* If I know and like people who speak that language
* Other . . .

WHERE DO I COME FROM?

Someone once said, "If you want to know about water, don't ask a fish." This is a way of saying that people take their own culture and language for granted. They don't normally think about either in a conscious manner. However, when people travel abroad, they come face to face with the basic issues of culture and language and find that they think about both a lot.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

While you're overseas, the people you meet will be curious about your family, home, school and community. They'll probably ask a lot of questions.

To make it easier for you to satisfy their curiosity, choose some PHOTOS to take along to show them where you come from. What will these pictures tell your host family about your home culture?

What vocabulary might you need to know in your new language in order to explain these pictures?

FAMILY RESEARCH

Spend some time talking to your parents or grandparents about your family history.

NAMES
What is the origin of your family name? What does it mean? Were there any changes in your family surname if your ancestors came from another country? What is the origin of your first name? Your nickname? Is there an equivalent of your first name in the language of your host country? Is there a nickname for your name?
EVENTS
What historical events (e.g., the Depression, World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War) have affected your family?
TRADITIONS
What special traditions are associated with holidays, birthdays, other occasions in your family?
HISTORY
What do you know about the childhood of your parents/grandparents: religion; politics; education; courtship; marriage; leisure activities; attitudes about death, etc.) Are there things in your family's history that no one talks about?

"We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time. . . ."

T.S. Eliot

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LANGUAGE PLUS

When you speak to people in your own language, more than just the words you use affects your communication. The next time you're having a conversation, think about the following:

- **Do you touch people you're speaking to?**
- **Do you look them in the eye?**
- **How close do you stand?**
- **Do you use gestures? (Wave your arms, make faces)**
- **Do you begin talking while the other person is still speaking?**

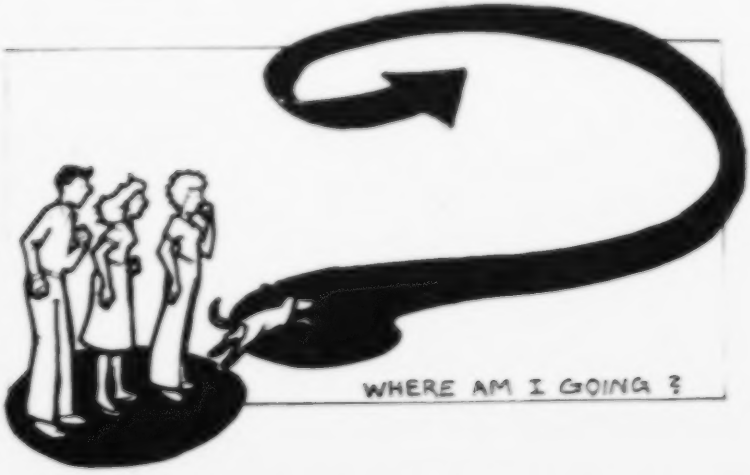
Try this: Tell a friend about your recent grade on a test or about your date last weekend. Then, tell a grandparent or another older person about the same things. In what ways do you speak differently to a friend your own age than to an older person?

Remember your thoughts on these questions in relation to your own language and culture because the "rules" in your host culture and language may be surprisingly different.

WHERE AM I GOING?

How shall I talk of the sea to the frog,
If he has never left his pond?
How shall I talk of the frost to the bird of the summerland,
If it has never left the land of its birth?
How shall I talk of life with the sage,
If he is prisoner of his doctrine?

Chung Tzu, 4th Century B.C.



WITHOUT OPENING AN ATLAS, DRAW A MAP OF YOUR HOST COUNTRY. WHAT COUNTRIES BORDER IT? LOCATE THE CAPITAL, MAJOR CITIES, RIVERS, MOUNTAINS, STATE OR REGIONS. NOW . . . CHECK YOUR DRAWING AGAINST A REAL MAP.

TEN QUESTIONS

Members of your host country will be surprised if you don't know much about their country. If you want to be a knowledgeable guest, you may want to gather some facts and learn how to pronounce the names of people, places and things before you go.

FAMOUS PEOPLE

Who is the leader of the government?

Name people famous in sports. In the arts (singers, film stars).

Who are the national heroes/heroines? Why are they well-known?

MEASURES

How are distances/ temperatures expressed?

What is the basic unit of currency?

What system of weights and measures is used?

What is your clothing size?

In a study of students in 9 countries, Americans came in NEXT TO LAST in their knowledge of other cultures.

MORE QUESTIONS

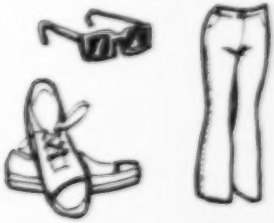
Expect changes in your daily routine. Finding out some of the following information before you leave may help you adjust. You can ask someone from your host country or someone who has recently travelled or lived there the following questions:

What time do people in the host country . . .

EAT BREAKFAST | EAT LUNCH | EAT DINNER | ARRIVE FOR A 7:00 PARTY

What's the attitude towards time and punctuality?

What are the common foods for each meal?



What is typical dress for teenagers--
at school?
on weekends?
for parties?

What do people usually do in their leisure time?
At what age do teenagers begin dating?

IDIOMA . . . LANGUAGE

Communication in your new language will be a continuing challenge. Knowing at least the basics to meet your most immediate needs ("survival language") will help a lot. Make a list of the things you'll need to know in order to survive. We've suggested a few from our experience.

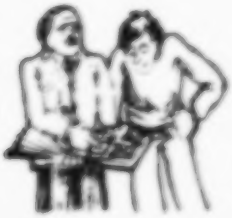
* **Finding a bathroom**
* **Explaining who you are and why you're there**
* **Saying, "No, thank you," politely but firmly**
*
*
*

Now all you need is to find out what to say and to practice a little. Here are some possibilities:

* **Talk to someone who knows the language: an exchange student, a native who lives in your town, a teacher, etc.**
* **Buy a dictionary or phrase book**
* **Check out language records from the library**
* **Join a language club in your school or community**
* **Visit an ethnic restaurant and order food in the new language** (Practice with the waiter or waitress if she or he speaks the language)
* **What else?????**

FINDING OUT

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO FIND OUT THE ANSWERS TO ALL YOUR (and our) QUESTIONS. Warning: Doing all these things may be hazardous to your health.



Find someone in your community who has lived in or visited the country. Ask him or her questions.

Look through the newspaper and clip articles concerning current events in your host country. What are the important national issues?

Check the Sunday travel section of a newspaper or National Geographic for articles about your host country.

Talk to former exchange students about the pros and cons of their experiences abroad.

Check the local library or bookstore for ethnic cookbooks. Prepare a dish typical of your host country's cuisine.

FINDING OUT

Get a newspaper or magazine from your host country. These should be available in a university or large city library. Look at the advertisements and compare them to ads found in your local newspaper. Can you make any predictions about the people in the host country from looking at the ads?

Call the banks in your city and find out if any have currency from the country you are about to visit. Find out the exchange rate. Figure out how much you can spend per week in this currency given the amount of travelers checks you are taking with you. Buy a small amount before you leave. How is it different from your currency?

Go to the post office and find out how much it costs to send a letter to your host country. How long will it take to arrive? Does the post office know how long it will take for a letter to come from there to your home?

Observe foreigners in your own country. What kind of things do they say or do that you find insulting or confusing? Think about yourself as a foreigner. How can you avoid these errors?

WHAT DO I KNOW?

"I know that my limitations are bound only by my lack of tolerance to the unknown. It is the willingness to be hurt, uncomfortable and to give without hesitation whenever there is need. With this willingness in practice, there can be no real loss. Each failure is a gain in understanding and one step closer to success."

William Clinger
Experimenter to Germany
1983

SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

You'll never know all you want to know about your host culture; there will always remain things that are difficult to understand. But by developing certain skills and attitudes you will be able to seek out information and use it in a way that will help you adjust to any new situation. This may in fact be the most important part of your whole experience.

As Don Juan, the Yaqui sorcerer, said to Castaneda, his apprentice, who consistently refuted Don Juan's vision of things:

> "WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TO SAY THE WORLD IS SO AND SO...JUST BECAUSE YOU THINK THE WORLD IS SO AND SO. WHO GAVE YOU THE AUTHORITY?...THE WORLD IS A MARVELOUS PLACE...FULL OF MYSTERY AND AWE."
>
> Carlos Castaneda
> A Separate Reality

Exploring a new culture involves a sense of adventure, a willingness to take risks, an openness to look at the world in new ways, and a responsibility to accept people on their terms.

RATE YOURSELF

Look at the following list and rate yourself on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high) depending on how you think these characteristics describe YOU. Decide which areas you need to work in and go to it.

I AM NEVER I AM SOMETIMES I AM ALWAYS

* open to differences: I accept other people's ways of doing things, even when they are not my way. ___
* able to put up with things I don't understand and accept that I may never understand them. ___
* flexible: able to go along with events as they are happening. ___
* a good observer: I am able to learn about people and situations by listening and watching. ___
* able to withhold judgment until I understand the situation. ___
* able to empathize with another's point of view. ___
* willing to take risks and make mistakes. ___
* able to maintain my sense of humor in difficult situations. ___
* able to find alternative solutions, ways of thinking and making decisions. ___

MEASURING CHANGE

By now you have begun to identify yourself through your own culture and language. No matter how international you may feel you are, your long cultural orientation within your native country has resulted in a very specific perspective which is not always easy to recognize, understand, and accept.

To become part of the host culture (to meet new people, to attempt new behaviors and ways of doing things) will be both exciting and challenging. You'll need to study, observe, record and categorize. Your growth in self-awareness and cultural awareness can be observed by checking in with yourself at regular intervals.

Spend some time thinking about the following questions. You may want to refer to your answers in the weeks and months ahead to see how you've changed.

* **What do I know about myself now that I didn't know last month?**
* **What have I learned about my own family and the community I live in?**
* **What do I know about my host country and its culture?**
* **What do I need to accomplish? How can I accomplish it?**
* **How will my language ability help or hinder my accomplishing my goals?**
* **What else might prevent me from successfully completing my goals?**

Name _____

U.S. Address _____

_____

Tel. No. _____

Host Family Name _____

Address _____

_____

Tel. No. _____

Host Community Representative _____

Address _____

_____

Tel. No. _____

Group Leader _____

Address _____

_____

Tel. No. _____

Passport Number _____

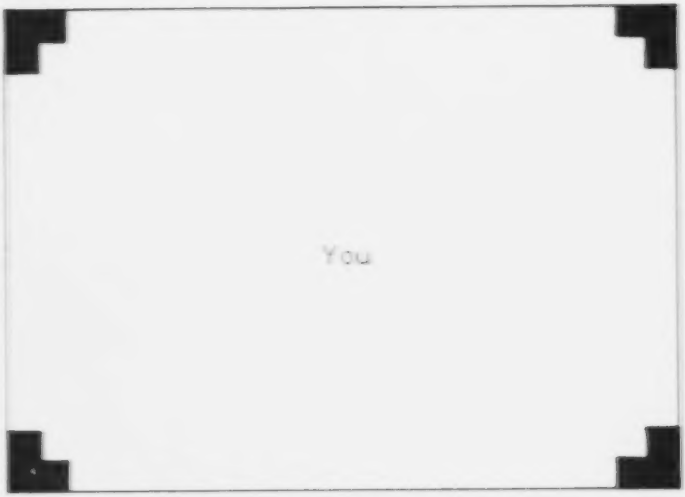
Travelers Checks Numbers _____

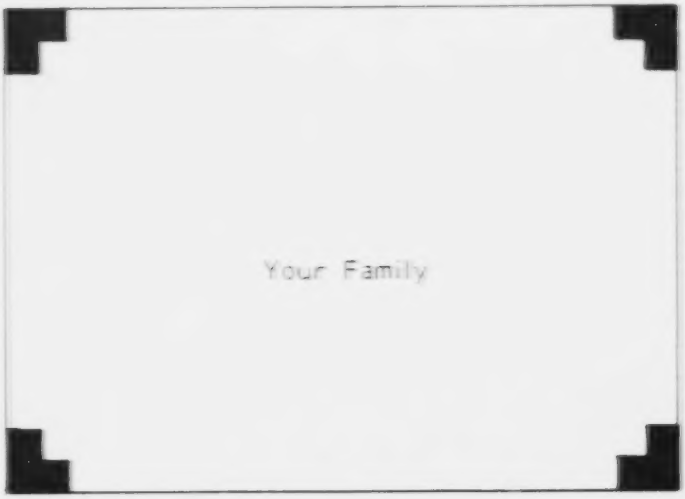
_____

_____

_____

Photos





Your House

Your Neighborhood

What other photos might be interesting to take?

TAKE MORE CHANCES...

If I had my life to live over, I'd dare to make more mistakes, I'd relax, I would limber up. I would take more chances...

You see, I'm one of those people who live sensibly and sanely hour after hour, day after day.

Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had it to do over again, I'd have more of them. In fact, I'd try to have nothing else. Just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day.

I've been one of those persons who never goes anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a raincoat, and a parachute. If I had it to do over again, I'd travel lighter.

I would start barefoot earlier in the Spring and stay that way longer in the Fall. I would go to more dances, I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daisies.

NADINE STAIR, age 85

Part II

FOCUSING

(Group Orientation)

The Experiment in International Living
Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

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PART II: Focusing

(Group Orientation)

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NOTE TO USERS

FOCUSING (Part II) may be used on your own or with a group, aided by a leader or trainer.

If you use Part II on your own, do as many of the activities as possible before arriving in-country.

If used with a group, the leader may refer to the Guide to Cross-Cultural Orientation. This field guide provides additional exercises which include team-building activities and cross-cultural simulations. The following chart shows how the two guides correlate.

Guide to Cross-Cultural Orientation (Leader's Manual		**Part II/Focusing** (Student Manual)
Session II	corresponds to	p. 4/On Your Own
Session III		p. 5/Fears and Expectations
Session IV		p. 7/Do You Know?
Session V		p. 8/Can you Say?
Session VII		p. 11/Karass
Session VII		p. 12/Family Proverbs
Session VII		p. 13/National Values
Session VII		p. 14/How We See Others
Session VII		p. 15/How Others See Us
Session VII		p. 16/What Skills Will Help Me?
Session VII		p. 17/Two Women
Session VIII		p. 18-19/Interviewing
Session IX		p. 23/What to Expect
Session IX		p. 24/How's It Going?
Session IX		p. 25/What Does Late Mean?
Session IX		p. 26-27/Culture Clash
Session IX		p. 28/Risky Business
Session IX		p. 29/Imagine!
Session X		p. 30-31/Field Plan
Session X		p. 32-34/Rate Yourself
Session X		p. 35/A Letter To Myself

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

WHAT HAVE I BROUGHT WITH ME?
WHAT INFORMATION WILL HELP?
WHAT WILL I NEED TO BE AWARE OF?
WHAT SKILLS WILL HELP ME?
HOW WILL I ADAPT?

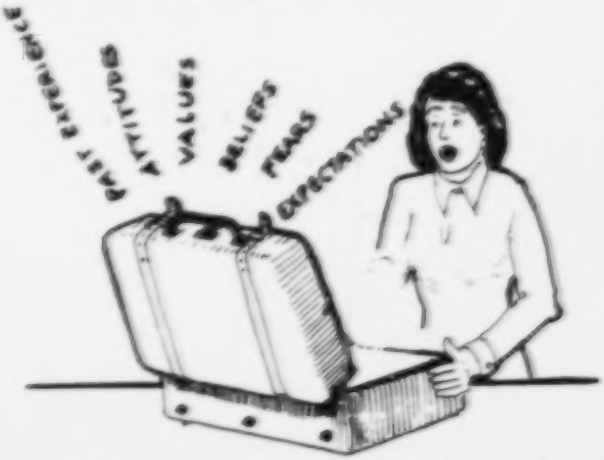
Living in another culture may provide the most enriching experience you will ever have. It may affect you in so many ways that it will take years before you realize how much you have learned. In this part, you will form a plan for guiding your own exploration in the field and you will FOCUS on what information, awareness and skills you'll need.

> If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere.
>
> Anonymous

WHAT HAVE I BROUGHT WITH ME?

To bring home the wealth of the Indies
You must carry the wealth of the Indies with you;
So it is in travelling, you must carry knowledge with you
If you would bring home knowledge.

Spanish Proverb



To be open and receptive to new situations, people and cultures takes practice, patience and motivation. Chances are you already have been in situations which tested your skills in adapting. Recognizing the attitudes and skills you bring with you will help prepare you to make the most of what lies ahead.

LEARNING

Learning on your own requires lots of initiative and responsibility, perhaps even more than when you are in a classroom. What do you usually do in each of the following situations?

IF I am confronted by a problem I:
- ☐ Ignore it and hope it will go away
- ☐ Think of various solutions and try one
- ☐ Talk it over with someone and follow his/her advice
- ☐ Other _____

IF I make a mistake I am:
- ☐ More careful in the future
- ☐ Philosophical because "everyone makes mistakes"
- ☐ Completely overwhelmed by it
- ☐ Aware of what has been learned
- ☐ Other _____

IF I try something new and it works I:
- ☐ Am willing to do it again
- ☐ Feel more confident to try other new things
- ☐ Want to share the experience with others
- ☐ Want to teach others what I have learned
- ☐ Other _____

IF I have to make a choice I:
- ☐ Consult a person I respect
- ☐ Consider various alternatives and choose whichever one seems the best
- ☐ Do whatever is easiest
- ☐ Other _____

On the basis of your answers, what will help you and what will work against you in the field?

ON YOUR OWN

To remind you of how you have learned "on your own" think of a time when you learned something outside of school.

1. WHAT did I learn? (e.g. How to change a bicycle tire? Do a new dance step?)

2. HOW did I learn it? (observation, experimentation, imitation, following spoken advice, following written instructions, etc.)

3. HOW did I feel while learning it? (excited, scared, frustrated, etc.)

4. LIST the advantages and disadvantages of learning about a country by living with a family as opposed to taking a vacation there (staying in hotels, going sightseeing, etc.)?

Advantages	*Disadvantages*

FEARS AND EXPECTATIONS

As you plan your trip, there are things you look forward to and also things that worry you. Recognition of these is a first step in working with them. List your fears and expectations in the chart below.

I am most looking forward to:	I am most worried about:

*Put a star by those expectations which are realistic.

What fears and expectations do you have in common with others who are about to enter the same experience?

WHAT INFORMATION WILL HELP?

"You cannot teach a person anything. You can only help him to find it for himself."

Galileo Galilei

Take advantage of the many resources which can provide information about most countries. Your host family will appreciate your knowledge of their culture and language. The more language you know, the more fully you will be able to interact with people. The more you know of the culture, the more appropriate your behavior will be.

DO YOU KNOW?

Seasoned travelers take care of the many details which make a stay abroad run smoothly well in advance of their departure. The checklist below should remind you of some of the essentials.

DO YOU KNOW:

	yes	no
The responsibilities of: - your host parents and local contact? - your leader? - yourself?		
What to do in case of: - a medical emergency? - a natural disaster? - a political emergency?		
How to contact your parents at all times? Your passport number and expiration date? Rules about drugs/alcohol/inappropriate behavior?		
Have you: - signed your passport? - recorded your travelers check numbers? - carried all your luggage one mile and - sent home unnecessary items?		
Have you: - learned what medical precautions to take? - received required immunizations? - packed all personal medication and records?		

BE SURE TO FIND THE ANSWERS TO ANY QUESTIONS YOU CHECKED "NO."

CAN YOU SAY?

Here are some common language situations you may encounter during your trip. Can you:

	YES	NO
SAY HELLO/GOODBYE		
ANSWER THE PHONE		
EXCUSE YOURSELF FROM THE TABLE		
INTRODUCE YOURSELF		
ORDER A MEAL		
BUY ITEMS AT A STORE		
BUY A BUS/TRAIN TICKET		
FOLLOW DIRECTIONS		
GET SOMEONE'S ATTENTION		
ASK THE TIME		
APOLOGIZE		
EXPLAIN THE LIMITS OF YOUR LANGUAGE ABILITY		
EXPLAIN YOUR REASONS FOR BEING IN THE COUNTRY		

In Part I Language Plus you looked at non-verbal cues in your own language. Do you know what's appropriate in your new language?

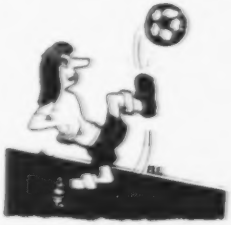
How will you respond to these frequently asked questions in your new language:
Why are you participating in this program?
Why did you choose this country?

BECOME AN EXPERT!

CAN YOU ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS IN PART I: WHERE AM I GOING?

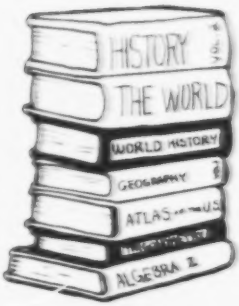
IF YOU CAN, TRY A FEW MORE:

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR HOLIDAYS? HOW ARE THEY CELEBRATED? WHAT ARE THE MOST POPULAR SPORTS?



WHAT DOES THE COUNTRY PRODUCE? WHAT ITEMS ARE COMMONLY EXPORTED?

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RELIGIONS?

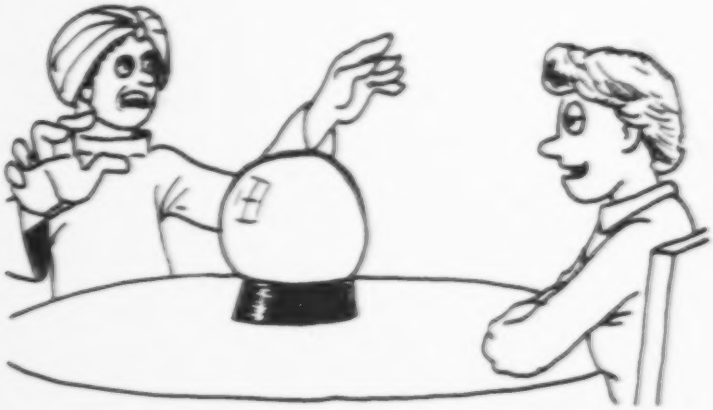


WHAT KIND OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM DOES THE COUNTRY HAVE?

WHAT WILL I NEED TO BE AWARE OF?

"You will never advance far in your understanding of another culture if you devote yourself to exclaiming that some things about it are wonderful and other things are terrible. This comes under the heading of entertainment and should not be confused with understanding."

John Gardner



To become aware of another cultural point of view, it is necessary to first understand your own cultural perspective. This can be more complicated than it might seem at first. In this section you will (1) define the word culture, (2) recognize the diversity of cultural sub-groups within your own culture and (3) become aware of some of the values, attitudes and beliefs people have within your cultural group.

KARASS

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF CULTURE

In his book, Cat's Cradle, Kurt Vonnegut coined the term "karass" to describe all the various groups of people in your life with whom you are connected in some way. For instance, if you were from the state of Indiana (like the characters in his story) then you would belong to the Hoosier karass, a Hoosier being a person from Indiana. In other words, throughout our lifetimes we are connected in special and significant ways with very distinct cultural groups. Try to define some of the "karass" of which you are a member.

Culture is:

Example:

I am:
Franco-American
female
teenager
a tennis player
a city person
a cat lover

I am:

My best friend is:

FAMILY PROVERBS

People of the same cultural group usually have similar values, attitudes and beliefs. To help understand your own values and how they might differ from those of the host culture, look at the American proverbs below. What values, beliefs or attitudes are expressed by each?

Rome wasn't built in a day.

The best things in life are free.

Out of sight, out of mind.

People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Now look at these proverbs from other countries: What do you think they mean? Is there a similar proverb from your country?

Even in fresh milk, there are hairs. (Africa)

The day doesn't know the dark. (Africa)

A stone offered by a friend is an apple. (Arab)

What will be, will be. (Spanish)

ARE THERE SPECIAL FAMILY PROVERBS YOU HAVE ALWAYS HEARD? WHAT DO THESE PROVERBS SAY ABOUT YOUR OWN FAMILY'S ATTITUDES, VALUES AND BELIEFS?

NATIONAL VALUES

The values of your country may be similar or different from those of the host country. What do you think are some values of:

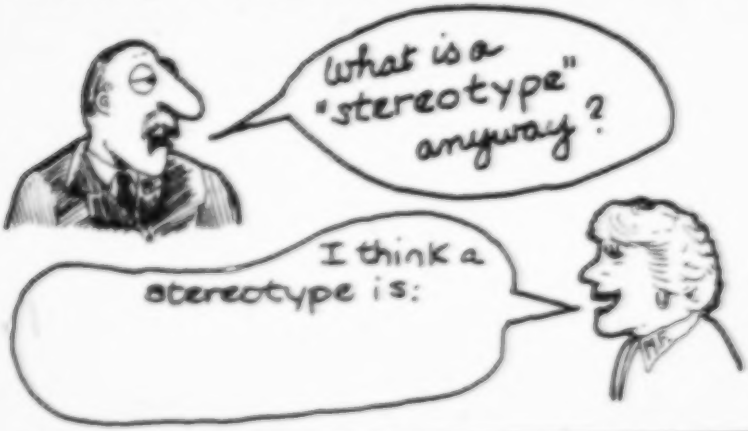
	Your Country	Your Host Country
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

* Indicate similar values between countries with a star.

O Indicate dissimilar values with a circle.

Which might you have the most difficulty adapting to in your host culture? Why?

HOW WE SEE OTHERS



A Typical Member of my Host Culture Would Be:	A Member of my Host Culture Probably Thinks People of my Culture Are:

HOW DID YOU DEVELOP THESE OPINIONS?

HOW OTHERS SEE US

When you are living with a host family in another country, you will probably be asked your opinions on current political and social issues. You may find that people in your host community have some strong opinions about your own country's policies.

WHAT ARE SOME CURRENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES THAT YOU MAY BE ASKED ABOUT?

1.

2.

3.

4.

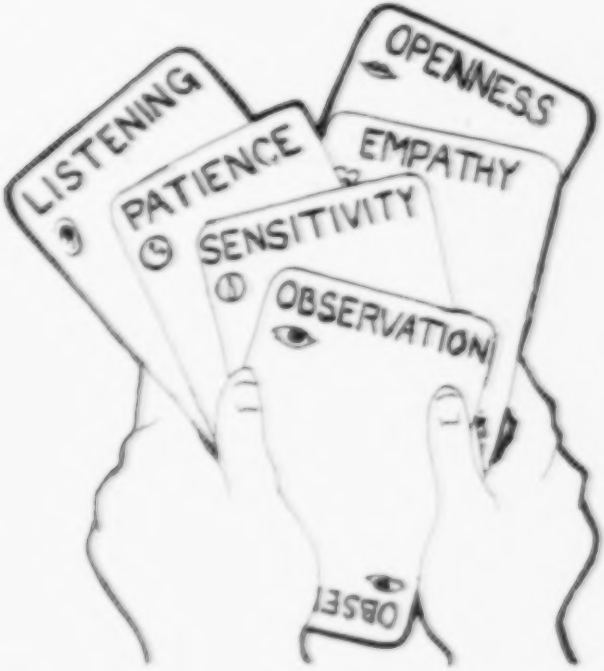
BEFORE YOU LEAVE, YOU MAY WANT TO DISCUSS THESE ISSUES WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND DECIDE HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THEM.

To help you have a dialogue and not an argument about controversial issues, you may want to learn how to say the following in the new language:

I THINK . . .
I FEEL . . .
IT SEEMS TO ME . . .
IT'S MY IMPRESSION . . .

Phrases such as these will change a strong statement of fact to a statement of individual and therefore more acceptable opinion. Be open to new ideas. You will probably return home with a new perspective on HOW OTHERS SEE US.

WHAT SKILLS WILL HELP ME?



No manual can completely describe or predict your cross-cultural experience. However, whatever language and cross-cultural communication skills you develop will help you, no matter what situation you find yourself in.

TWO WOMEN

Can you see both the old woman and the young woman? For some people, it is hard to see both. This may be because once you have seen something one way it is often hard to perceive it in a new way.

How does this relate to how you might perceive things in another culture?

INTERVIEWING

Interviewing is a skill which helps you to get to know people and to gather information. You have seen or heard interviews on TV and radio, but you may not have actually conducted an interview with a stranger. Practice doing an interview with a partner.

1. Identify someone you do not know who might be available for a short interview.

2. When approaching a prospective "interviewee" identify yourself and explain "I am learning how to interview and I would appreciate 15-20 minutes of your time."

3. Remember to be polite, show respect and dress appropriately.

4. Think of a theme. For example, interview someone about his/her work. Come up with 4 or 5 questions to get started.

   * What does your job entail?

   * What kind of people do you come in contact with?

   * What do you like most/least about your job?

(Do not ask questions that only result in "yes" or "no" answers. Be careful not to ask questions which might be offensive.)

INTERVIEWING

5. Following the interview, write up or discuss:

- a description of the person and his/her environment
- a summary of the interview itself, including at least one thing you learned from observation (not from what was said)
- how you felt about making the contact
- how the interview structure could have been improved
- how well you think you understood each other
- anything else which stands out about the interview

Every culture is different, so be sensitive to situations where interviewing may be inappropriate in the country or community you are visiting.

"People will ask about your country, but do not talk only about yourself. Ask questions about your host country. They will be happy to answer and introduce you to their way of life."

Experimenter to the U.S., 1984

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

LISTENING

Listening well is an art. Try this exercise with a partner or a friend to assess your ability to listen and understand.

1. A speaks for 5 minutes on the subject, "Why I Want to Live in Another Country"; B listens.

2. For 2 minutes, B summaries; A listens. (No discussion.)

3. For 1 minute, A corrects; B listens.

Discuss your feelings with your partner about listening and being understood.

- How well were you able to summarize what your partner said?
- What did you learn about your ability to listen? Did you rely on any non-verbal cues?
- How or in what ways might your ability to listen change while listening to a foreign language? What non-verbal cues might you look for?

HOW WILL I ADAPT?

"Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go."

T.S. Eliot

Taking risks can be both exciting and frightening. It is normal to feel overwhelmed at times. Set realistic goals for yourself. In addition, be willing to approach new experiences with your eyes--and your mind--wide open!

WHAT TO EXPECT

Your stay may be a series of exciting as well as difficult moments. Ups and downs are normal and healthy and should be expected. The important thing is to learn from the difficult moments. Here are some of the phases you may experience in adjusting to your new culture.

The honeymoon--Everything is new and exciting.

Culture shock--The excitement is gone. Differences begin to emerge; questions arise about how to relate to the opposite sex and to the host family.

Surface adjustment--It's starting to make sense. You can communicate basic ideas. You are making some friends and feeling more comfortable.

Unresolved problems--With friends or family may surface. You may wonder why you ever came here and be extremely homesick.

I feel at home--You accept the new culture as just another way of living. You may not approve of it always, but you accept and understand differences.

Departure concern--You begin to sense personal changes. You have mixed feelings about returning home.

Not everyone experiences all of these stages nor experiences them with the same intensity.

HOW'S IT GOING?

Chart your cycle of ups and downs. What caused these? What can you do to change a difficult moment into an exciting one? What have you done in the past when you're down? What can you do to change the direction of a downswing? (Take a walk? Talk to a friend? Write in your journal?)

	2 weeks before departure	1 week before departure	arrival at orientation	half-way through orientation	NOW
UP					
O.K.					
DOWN					

WHAT DOES "LATE" MEAN?

Try to become aware of your behavior: What pleases your hosts? What offends your hosts? This will mean viewing your behavior in an objective way. Try to see yourself as they are seeing you. Explore the choices available:

Complete rejection of the host culture: You prefer to do things as they are done in your home not as they are done in your host culture.

- You've been waiting for someone to pick you up for a party since 8:00. It's now 10:30. You are so upset when she or he arrives you refuse to go.

Partial adaptation: You'd still prefer to do things as they are done at home, but you're willing to adapt to some aspects of this new culture.

- You're still ready at 8:00 but you don't get upset when your date is "late."

Integration into the host culture: You reject or temporarily abandon your own culture.

- You begin to arrive "late" for events.

Becoming bicultural: You learn to adapt successfully to both cultures so that you are accepted as a member of each.

- You know when to arrive "late" (actually on time) in one culture and to be "on time" in another.

Developing a Multicultural world view: You can adjust to any new culture through your sensitivity to what is and isn't acceptable.

- You are aware that the concept of punctuality differs from culture to culture. You find out what is normal and adjust accordingly.

CULTURE CLASH

> Toward the end of the homestay, I began to realize that Italian culture isn't better and it isn't worse; it's just different. As a result, I stopped judging things so quickly and, over time, got to be more flexible.
>
> Graham Herrick, Experimenter to Italy, '83

When people of two cultures come together, it is hoped that they will respect each other. However, when you are in someone else's home, the expectation is that you will do most of the adapting.

Imagine yourself in this situation:

You are living with a family with different religious beliefs. At meals they say a long prayer and the words contradict your personal beliefs. Would you:

1. ☐ Join in?
2. ☐ Sit silently?
3. ☐ Try to get the family to change the words of the prayer to something more universal?
4. ☐ Start coming to dinner late so that you miss the prayer?
5. ☐ Other?

CULTURE CLASH

1. Joining in indicates that you are interested and willing to learn about their religion: a good option.

2. Sitting silently indicates respect: also a good option.

3. Trying to get them to change the prayer would be inappropriate as you're there to learn about their culture.

4. Coming to dinner late would be impolite and sure to cause friction between you and your host family.

5. Other . . . analyze <u>your</u> choice.

When faced with a cross-cultural challenge in your homestay, think of alternatives and examine each of them carefully.

RISKY BUSINESS

If you went to live with a family in France, it would be normal to kiss people (both of same and opposite sex) on both cheeks when you met. Would **you**?

If you went to live with a family in Japan, it would be normal to eat raw fish frequently. Would **you**?

If you went to live with a family in Italy, it would be normal to walk down the street arm-in-arm with friends of the same sex. Would **you**?

IMAGINE!

There are probably lots of things you hope to learn during your stay abroad which will help you get along better in the new culture. Make a list of all the things you want to accomplish. Let your imagination run wild. Put a check by those which are most important to you.

Most Important	List of Things I Want to Learn

Look back over your list and see if everything can be realistically accomplished in your time abroad. Cross out any that are not realistic, or change them so that they are possible. For example, you may not learn French fluently in 5 weeks but you can learn to carry on simple conversations.

FIELD PLAN

Look at your list on the preceding page and organize it in the categories below. Then work across the page and fill in what you'll need to do to accomplish your goals.	Cross-Cultural Skills and Attitudes needed to accomplish this goal.
WHAT I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT: THE COUNTRY AND CULTURE	
FAMILY AND FRIENDS	
MYSELF	
OTHER	

FIELD PLAN

What language will you need to accomplish this goal? The following pages will give suggestions. Be as specific as possible.	What might prevent you from accomplishing this goal? What risks will you need to take?	What resources will help you (people, t.v., books)?

RATE YOURSELF

The following list can be used to rate your ability to get along in your new language. It can also be used to fill in the language section of your field plan.

I CAN:	POOR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
introduce myself and ask for another's name			
ask for or give directions or instructions			
ask for and tell the time of day--day of week--date			
order a simple meal alone			
talk about the weather			
make purchases (food, clothing, souvenirs, train tickets)			
respond to biographical questions (about own nationality, marital status, occupation, date and place of birth, etc.)			
ask for, obtain, and understand biographical information from others			

RATE YOURSELF

I CAN:	POOR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
travel alone by bus/train/taxi, etc.			
interact socially (with appropriate greetings, introductions, leave-taking expressions and gestures)			
take and give messages over the telephone			
understand a television program			
understand a radio program			
apologize for a mistake			
assist someone else who does not know the language in coping with the situations or problems described in the preceding statements			
describe my most recent job or activity in some detail			
provide detailed information about my family, home and hometown			
give a brief autobiography and tell of my immediate plans and hopes			

RATE YOURSELF

I CAN:	POOR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
speak of my host family/community/country			
use the systems of measurement of my language of study (distance/time/weight) to express my ideas			
contribute to an everyday conversation among native speakers			
participate in social situations with my hosts, without offending or irritating them linguistically or culturally			
take notes and summarize in informal discussion			
talk about my native and/or host country in the following areas: geography, religious beliefs and practices, economy, government and laws, the arts, national attitudes, etc.			

I've learned that people are people, regardless of who or what they are. Even with minimal conversation, a smile or a good morning can form warm feelings and lasting friendships.
John Hilgart, Experimenter to France, '83

A LETTER TO MYSELF

Write yourself a letter and talk about your hopes and fears for your experience abroad. (You can write it on the next page or on a separate sheet to be sealed in an envelope to keep your thoughts confidential.) Keep the letter until you return home. It will be interesting to see if what you are imagining now matches reality of your stay in the host culture. The following suggestions can serve as a guideline.

1. Describe the most wonderful thing you can imagine will happen.

2. Describe the worst thing you imagine will happen.

3. Describe the best homestay family you can imagine.

4. Describe the worst homestay family you can imagine. If you are placed with that family, what can you do to make the best of the situation?

5. What do you see as your role in your homestay family?

6. How can you get to know your homestay family and help them get to know you?

Date:

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

– ROBERT FROST

Part III

GETTING THE PICTURE

(In-Country)

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Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

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Credits

The model of NAPI KEPRA pp. 25-51 was originally presented by John D. Donoghue, et al., in an unpublished document, "Doing Community Development," U.S. Peace Corps, Washington, D.C., Summer 1965.

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PART III: GETTING THE PICTURE
(In-Country)

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THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

. . . A SHORT STORY ABOUT GETTING THE WHOLE PICTURE

Six blind men on their way to visit the Rajah encountered an elephant. Not being able to see it, they each felt the elephant with their hands to determine what sort of creature it was. The first man grabbed hold of its trunk and remarked, "This animal is very like a snake." The second touched its tusk and said, "No, my friend. It is really more like a spear." The third felt its leg and remarked, "Why it's exactly like a tree!" The fourth, encountering its ear, said with conviction, "You are all mad! It resembles a fan in every way." The fifth, who had approached the animal from its side, said, "Why it seems to me to be very like a wall." And when the sixth grabbed hold of its tail, he chided the others for their foolishness saying, "Anyone can tell that it is exactly like a rope." Each man began to argue his point with such conviction that a fight began.

Just at that point the Rajah came along the road and stopped their quarreling. The first man said, "Let us ask the Rajah to settle once and for all the exact nature of this creature." The Rajah explained that each man had only felt a small part of a very large animal, and that to learn the truth wise men must put together every small part to learn about the whole.

TUNING IN

Arrival is a moment of great excitement . . . and some confusion. You have tried to prepare for this moment. Yet readings and discussions about the host culture never quite match the reality of being there. You no longer have to imagine; the sights and sounds are all around you.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

As a newcomer many things will seem different to you: the way people dress and behave, peculiar sights and sounds, strange food, the currency, etc. But many of these impressions are often forgotten in just a few days or weeks as you adapt to the host culture. Try to capture some of these early impressions and how you feel about them. They will be interesting to read later on.

Some First Impressions	How I Feel About Them

GETTING STARTED

Now that your field experience has begun, you have a chance to try lots of things you've never done before.

Do something simple as soon as you arrive:

DON'T BLOCK IT OUT!

Often when you don't understand the language it is easy to lose confidence in your ability to communicate. One tendency is simply to block out the language all around you, much as you screen out the T.V. when you are reading. You do this partially because you don't understand what's going on anyway, so it seems as if there's no point in listening.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO UNDERSTAND EVEN WITH LIMITED OR NO LANGUAGE AT ALL. YOU CAN:

The first ways require no language or less involvement than the last ones. The next two pages give you some ideas for getting started.

FROM OBSERVATION

TOPIC	
Meeting People	What physical gestures (e.g., handshakes, bows, embracing, kissing) are used when saying hello or goodbye? How close do people stand to each other when they talk? What eye contact is appropriate when meeting people? Is it different depending on sex or age? Do people touch? When? How often?
Food	In a restaurant, what gestures do people use to call the waiter/waitress? Do restaurant bills have a service charge added to them? Do you also tip? Who usually pays when you go out?
Time	What are the hours for meals, bedtime? What is the concept of punctuality, i.e., if a party is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., what time do people usually arrive?
Making an Apology	Are certain gestures used when making an apology (e.g., when stepping on someone's foot?)

TO PARTICIPATION

What are common expressions for greeting/leave-taking? What do people say first thing in the morning or before going to bed?

If there are different forms of "you" (the second person pronoun), figure out the kinds of people you would generally address with each form.

What titles are used with people? When do you move from formal to more familiar forms of address?

What do people say when they call the waiter/waitress? What do they say when they order? How do they ask for the check?

What is a polite way to refuse food? How do you ask for more?

Are there various ways of expressing time?

Are there expressions people use about time (e.g., Time flies; Time is money)?

What do you say when you apologize? Does this vary according to circumstances?

SURVIVAL

By now you've probably learned to say, "Where's the bathroom?" but you may still feel bombarded by constant use of the new language. It will help a lot if you can get some control over what's being said. One way to do this is to learn expressions which will help you to explain your situation, to slow things down, and to get repetitions and explanations. Here's a list of phrases to find out. REMEMBER, there may not be exact translations so look for appropriate equivalents or substitutes.

Excuse me.	_____
I'm sorry.	_____
Can you help me please?	_____
I don't understand.	_____
Please speak more slowly.	_____
Could you repeat that?	_____
How do you say _____?	_____
What does _____ mean?	_____
How do you spell that?	_____
I don't speak _____ very well, but I want to learn.	_____

LANGUAGE

Did I say that correctly?

Is there a better way to say that?

Did you understand?

Did I pronounce that correctly?

Please correct me when I say something wrong.

Thanks a lot.

I really appreciate that.

Other expressions:

Find as many alternative ways to say each phrase as possible

SIGN LANGUAGE

With little or no ability to speak the language of your host country, you can still communicate. Be as creative as possible in using gestures and objects to get across your ideas. Your efforts may motivate others who do not speak your language to do the same, and you may be pleasantly surprised at how much rapport can develop with few words.

Examples:

Exchange names. (Point to self, point to other and look quizzical.)

Describe family. (Use drawings, fingers, mime.)

Describe home and hometown. (Use drawings, gestures such as big, small, near, far, numbers, and maps to show location and names of nearby cities.)

Tell about things you like to do (with a smile, mime sports and other activities, etc.)

Tell about some things you don't particularly enjoy doing (with a frown or sad face).

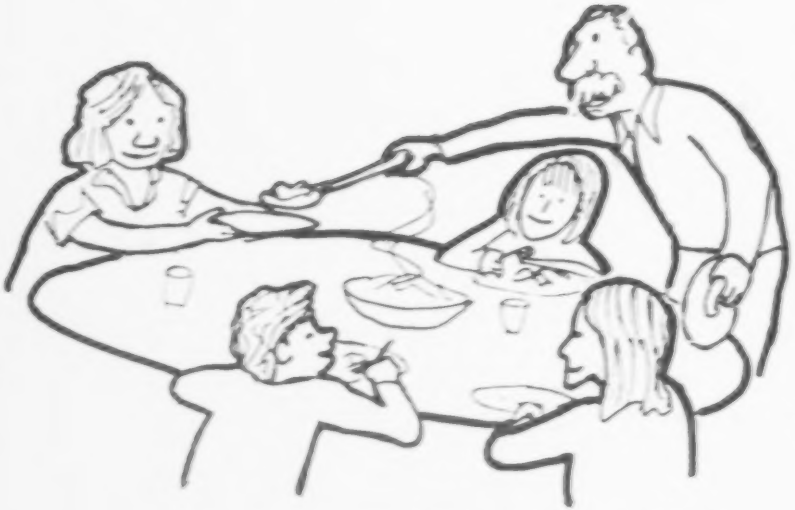
Tell someone where you're going, what you're doing, where you live. (Try to find out the same information from the other person.)

Use a map, drawings and gestures to show that you are living with a family, studying (what?), working (as what?).

[illegible] generation necessary for [illegible] cation may make you uncomfortable, but the more you practice, the easier it will be. As people try to explain their thoughts and teach you, you'll hear new words and phrases. Try to focus on these words and repeat them to confirm your understanding and pronunciation. Gradually, the non-verbal exchanges will become more verbal, and you will begin to build a repertoire of useful vocabulary and expressions in your new language.

A written or taped journal may also help you keep track of what you learn.

LIVING WITH YOUR FAMILY



"The important thing that happened to me involved meaningful relationships with people. . . . My Italian mother was warm, loving and giving; that we understood one another transcended language."

Experimenter to Italy, 1982

"I loved my family and homestay community. They were wonderful to me in every way. This summer was absolutely fantastic and I wish it had never ended . . ."

Experimenter to Spain, 1983

A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

YOUR HOST FAMILY

Living with your family will be the most rewarding part of your experience. Many people travel abroad each year--as tourists, businesspeople, diplomats. But few have the opportunity to enter someone's home and be treated as a member of a family. This means that when you leave you can take with you not only souvenirs, but more importantly a relationship which can last a lifetime! Living with a family provides this opportunity, but a lot depends on you.

LEARNING & SHARING

Family participation is a two-way experience. You can learn from the family, just as they may also learn from you. However, remember you bear the major responsibility since you chose to become a member of their family, and not the other way around. You came to learn and not to teach. But if they show interest in learning about you and your language, by all means share.

COURTESY & ETHICS

A word of caution. Since cultures differ, you must be careful as you explore not to ask questions or do things which are inappropriate. For example, there may be rooms in the house you shouldn't enter; it may not be o.k. to help yourself to food from the refrigerator, or there may be certain topics that are never discussed. Try to find out what is all right and what isn't. Remember--what was fine at home may not be fine now, since courtesy and ethics often vary from home to home and culture to culture.

AT THE BEGINNING . . .

At the beginning I felt extremely lonely and far away from my family and friends. I thought I would never make it through. I really didn't know what I'd do.

However, I was here and I realized that I'd come to "experiment" in another life. Then I decided to try to do my best . . . I decided that I was here to learn and I started to get involved in the exciting process of trying to learn everything about everything. Above all, I started to adjust my mind to new values . . . I kept observing people and things and I finally learned who I am, what I like, what I dislike, what I want to do.

At the beginning of the stay, I was always fighting with my brother. However, I talked it over with my whole family and my brother himself, and I came to understand that was just in his nature, his personality. Later we got along together quite well because I knew him and I was able to accept him and live with him.

My sister was really nice when we were by ourselves, but when there were more people around us she

. . . I FELT LONELY

was different. Sometimes she said things that hurt; I know she didn't do it intentionally, but she did it. One day after she said one of these things to me, I just went to my room and started to cry. The only person who noticed it was my mom. She was very sensitive, a great mom. She went back to my room to ask me what the problem was. I don't usually like to admit I have problems, but I finally told her about Julie. Then Julie came to talk to me and we started crying together, and that's when I realized she would never do anything to hurt me, on purpose at least. She did it because she grew up in a family that teases a lot and she didn't realize she was hurting me.

As I learned to be more patient and open-minded, I got closer to Julie and now I'm really going to miss her.

Remember, it's important to solve any problem, even the smallest one, because that's the easiest one to solve. If you let them get big, it turns out to be a different situation.

Experimenter to the U.S., 1981

JEALOUS BROTHER

DEAR ADDIE: My host brothers and sisters are jealous of all the attention their Mom and Dad give me. My host parents have worked hard to make me feel comfortable in their home and I really appreciate it. I think my host brothers and sisters are mean.

"Mother's Pet"

DEAR MOTHER'S PET: Don't be angry with your host brothers and sisters. This may be the first time they have heard someone else call their parents Mom and Dad. It would probably be difficult for you if you were in the same situation in your own family. Talk to them about your feelings and let them know how nice it is for you to feel a part of their family.

DEAR ADDIE: My host family lives on a farm 25 miles from the nearest town. I come from the capital city of my country and am used to a lot of action. It's so boring here. What should I do?

"Bored in the Country"

DEAR BORED IN THE COUNTRY: There really are lots of things to do no matter what the setting. For some ideas of ways to explore your new community see the Exploring the Community section of your Manual.

DEAR ADDIE: I expected my host family sister would be someone I could hang out with and do things with. But she turned out to be a real dud. We have no common interests. What should I do?

"Stuck with a Nerd"
(S.w.A.N.)

DEAR S.w.A.N.: I cannot believe that you can't find one single interest that you and your host family sister share. I refuse to believe your interests are so limited. Also, look at your other options. You don't have to spend all your time with your host sister. Get out and make other friends in the community. Visit local agencies and community clubs. Stop feeling sorry for yourself.

RESENTS ATTENTION

DEAR ADDIE: My family at home are very trusting. I can come and go whenever I like. My host family is completely different. I feel like they don't trust me at all. They insist I come home by 10:30. They continually pester me with questions about where I'm going, who I'm going with, and what I'll be doing. I feel like I'm -

"Under lock and key"

DEAR UNDER LOCK AND KEY: Remember you have spent years building a trusting relationship with your own parents. Your host family have not had that time to get to know you. They feel responsible for your safety. Also, expectations of children vary greatly from family to family and from culture to culture. Try to find out if the new "rules" in your host family are typical of other families. If you are careful to always keep your host family informed of what you are doing, they may soon develop the trusting relationship you'd like.

DEAR ADDIE: The food that my host family serves is just awful. They eat things that we would NEVER eat at home. I can't stand to look at it or smell it much less put it in my mouth. Sign me,

"Starving"

DEAR STARVING: It is difficult to adjust to new food, especially when it looks and smells so different from what you're accustomed to. However, if you try some, you may be surprised at how good it is. If, on the other hand, there is something you feel you just can't eat, politely refuse it and take a lot of the other food. If there is a food that really makes you sick, explain to your host mother that you are allergic to that food and she will probably try to cook something you can eat.

JUST IN CASE

PROBLEMS DO ARISE

In the beginning it's going to be hard. If you have any problems, don't just lock yourself in your room--talk to other people. Experimenter to the U.S.

LISTENING
Listen! A high percentage of miscommunication takes place because one person isn't listening or is not listening hard enough (what's the hidden message behind the words?) Try and read between the lines. All this is doubly confused by cultural differences.
REASONS WHY
Solve the mystery! Try to define what's going on around here and come up with some reasons. You may never figure it out entirely, but you're bound to learn something in the process.
APPRECIATION
Show your appreciation. Bring flowers home or something for the kids.
COMPROMISE
Compromise. Take the first step to a solution. Apologize even when you don't feel you are at fault. Demonstrate your willingness to work things out.

Contrary to the general tendency, ignoring a problem usually does NOT MAKE IT GO AWAY.

BRAINSTORMING

Define the situation (on the left).

List some solutions (on the right).

Check off the ones that seem most practical.

Choose one and try it! (Remember, doing something will probably make you feel better than doing nothing!)

WHAT I FEEL/THINK	WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT IT
Example: I'm tired of playing with the young kids in the family. They're driving me crazy.	- I'll spend an hour a day playing with the children and that's all. - I'll tell my host parents I need more time alone and ask their help. - I'll use my time with the kids to improve my new language.

HOST FAMILIES SPEAK

The following is drawn from a list of concerns often mentioned by host families. **HAVE YOU:**

- ☐ Acted as though you are a paying guest; failed to show appreciation?
- ☐ Returned home very late at night?
- ☐ Neglected to inform your family of changes in plans, late arrivals, or absences from home?
- ☐ Been so busy you had no time to spend with your family; failed to help with chores?
- ☐ Neglected the local cultural resources; spent too much time reading, writing letters, etc.?
- ☐ Used the telephone or bathroom excessively?
- ☐ Come to the table inappropriately dressed?
- ☐ Slept too late in the morning?
- ☐ Failed to speak your host's language in the company of hosts?
- ☐ Put your major interest in your own group rather than your family?

"I've learned how to get along better with people by forgetting how I feel for the moment and thinking about them and how they might feel.
Gina Marie Silva, Experimenter, 1983

MIDWAY!

Midway through your stay, read and answer these questions as honestly as you can.

* On the basis of your experience so far list 3 things that you think your host family has learned and 3 things that your host family still doesn't understand about you.

* List 3 things that you have learned and 3 that you still don't understand about them.

* What has been your greatest challenge so far? How have you tried to meet this challenge?

* Is there any part of your homestay that has turned out to be a disappointment? Is there a part that is better than expected?

* What can you do about any of the above that will improve the rest of your experience?

* Look again at your Field Plan (Part II). What new goals do you want to set for the remainder of your stay?

	NONE OF THE TIME	SOME OF THE TIME	ALL OF THE TIME
I get along with my family	____	____	____
I use the host language	____	____	____
I am accepted by host friends and family	____	____	____
I feel relaxed and comfortable	____	____	____
I like being with people from my host country	____	____	____

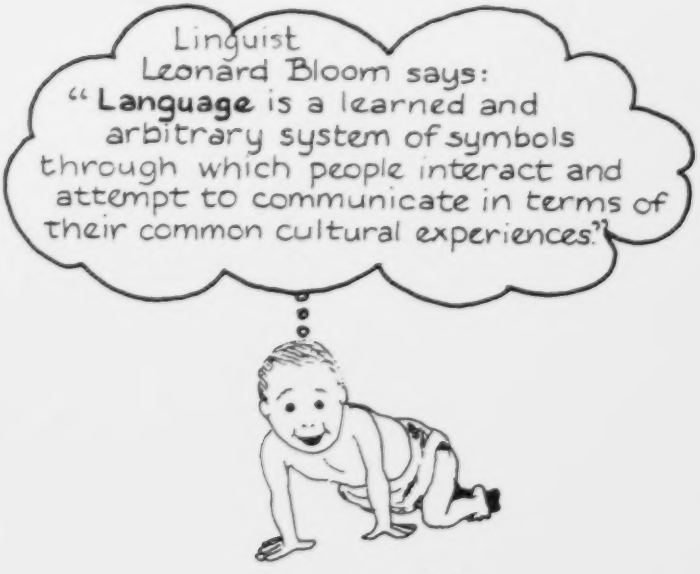
EXPLORING THE COMMUNITY

"I believe that each day of our lives can be used as a learning experience whether it is simple or complex. It is up to each individual as to whether he or she utilizes this potential for learning in each situation . . . I attempt to always keep an open mind and a positive attitude. During my 'experiment' I found this was a valuable tool to carry with me not only into the homes of the Japanese families, but throughout the rest of my life as well."

Kathy Ward, Experimenter to Japan, 1983

A WORD ABOUT LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

What is culture anyway?
Culture is everything people make or do: the way they organize their society according to the ideas, beliefs and values they hold.


Linguist Leonard Bloom says:
"**Language** is a learned and arbitrary system of symbols through which people interact and attempt to communicate in terms of their common cultural experiences."

SOME WAYS

The ways you can learn about your new language and culture are obviously limited by your language ability. But even with limited language you can still do a lot.

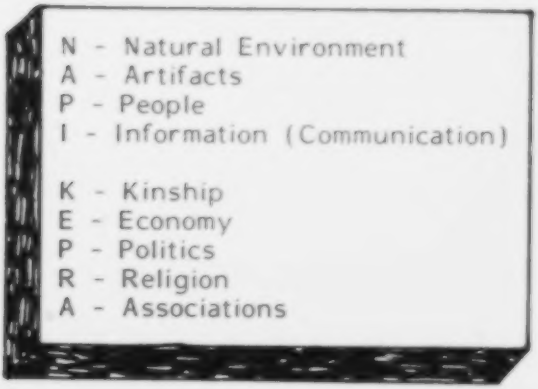
YOU CAN:

PASSIVE WAYS ↓	OBSERVE →	How people interact with each other. Who talks to whom. Note nonverbal gestures.
	LISTEN →	To conversations and to the radio. Can you tell what topic is being discussed? What helps you understand? The tone, gestures, other clues?
	WATCH →	TV and movies.
	READ →	Books, magazines, comic books, ads, newspapers, signs, and posters. What can you learn from these?
	ASK →	Questions of other people; start family discussions; showing interest and curiosity will go a long way.
ACTIVE WAYS	PARTICIPATE →	In as many events and activities as you can.

N.A.P.I.-K.E.P.R.A.

Living with a family provides a good way to learn about the culture through the eyes of people who are a part of it. Everyday routines provide lots of opportunities.

A more systematic approach to community exploration is outlined in the following pages. Some people refer to it as N.A.P.I./K.E.P.R.A. which stands for:



You can choose any area and explore as many aspects of it as you wish. You don't need to go in order. You may, for example, want to find out about dating customs in your host culture. Look in the People section. Continue with your other interests. You can use these suggestions and add your own. This will give you a start, but your options are limitless.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO FIND OUT?

WHERE CAN YOU START?

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Areas for Exploration:

- the terrain
- the climate
- rivers and other bodies of water
- altitude
- vegetation and wildlife
- other?
-

1 TAKE A WALK AROUND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD with a friend or family member. Note similarities and differences to your neighborhood at home.

Similarities	Differences

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

2 EXAMINE THE BUILDINGS IN YOUR TOWN. What materials are commonly used in construction? Trace these to their source. How old are the buildings called "old"? What attitudes do people have toward old things? What do they consider "new" and "modern?"

3 GO TO THE HIGHEST VANTAGE POINT of your town. Look at how the city is laid out. Identify which geographical features have affected its growth and why. Just by looking, what can you determine about the history of the town's development?

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

"When someone is seeking, it happens quite easily that he only sees the thing that he is seeking, that he is unable to find anything, unable to absorb anything, because he is only thinking of the thing he is seeking."

Herman Hesse

ARTIFACTS

Areas for Exploration:

- the layout of your city
- house construction
- clothes
- things in your house
- items sold in markets
- objects treasured or discarded
- other?
-

1 WHAT ITEMS ARE TREASURED or valued by your host family? What is thrown out?

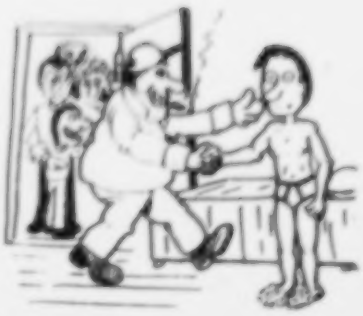
2 TALK WITH A HOST FRIEND ABOUT GIFT-GIVING. On what occasions are they given? Who gives to whom? What gifts are typically given? Are there any gifts that you should not give? How do people receive gifts? Do they open them in front of you or save them until later? How do they express thanks? Try to observe both verbal and nonverbal expressions. Compare to gift-giving practices in your own country.

ARTIFACTS

3 WALK AROUND THE HOME and observe the layout of the rooms.

Name of Room	Its Use; Who Uses It/When	Interesting Objects in Room/Function

What status does "my room" have? How important are doors in defending one's private space? Are they kept open or closed? How do members of the family achieve privacy?



ARTIFACTS

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

PEOPLE

Areas for Exploration:

- population and distribution
- social classes and neighborhoods
- ethnic or other minorities
- beliefs, values, attitudes
-
-

1 BY TALKING WITH A HOST FRIEND learn as much as you can about the population. What ethnic groups make it up? What is their status and impact on their community? Are minority rights protected?

2 MANY CULTURES HAVE AN EXPRESSION similar to "make yourself at home." What does this mean? What does "guest" mean? What are the responsibilities of a guest? What should one normally offer to do?

Estás en tu casa.

Faites comme chez vous.

Fai come a casa tua.

PEOPLE

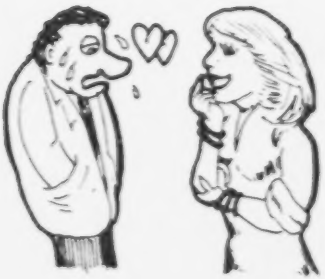
3 LIST SOME VALUES, ATTITUDES, OR BELIEFS you have discovered in the host culture similar to your own. What are some that are different? Review the times you've encountered behavior that you didn't understand.

That's the way the cookie crumbles!

C'est la vie!

¡Que será, será!

Similar Beliefs	Different Beliefs



4 FIND OUT FROM A HOST FRIEND how you would ask a person of the opposite sex to go out on a date. Under what conditions would you accept a similar invitation? What are the implications of the words "boyfriend" and "girlfriend?"

PEOPLE

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

INFORMATION

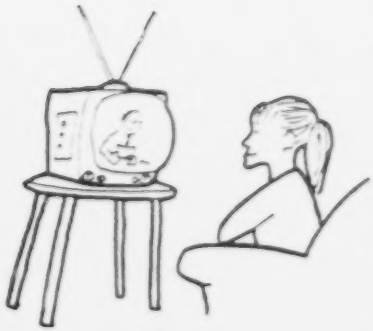
Areas for Exploration:

- communication systems, national and local
- the media, current issues
- family stories and gossip
-
-

1

OBSERVE PEOPLE ON THE PHONE. What do they say when they answer? What polite phrases are used? How do you close a conversation? How do you use public phones? Do you need special coins?

- Answer the phone.
- Call a friend.
- Call a cinema and find out what's playing.



2

WATCH THE NEWS ON T.V. Or, listen to it on the radio for a number of days. What are the top news stories? What current issues most challenge existing social norms (drugs, homosexuality)? Are you able to discuss these issues with your family?

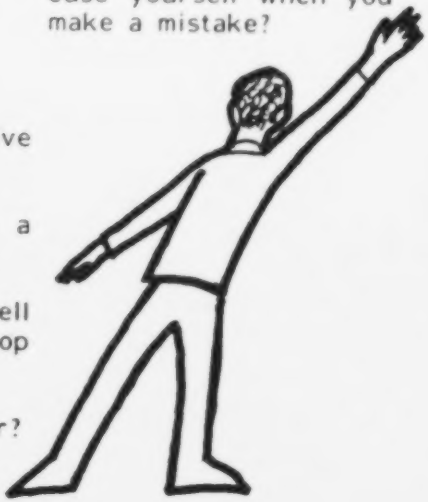
INFORMATION

3 OBSERVE THE WAY YOUR FAMILY INTERACTS. What topics are discussed at meals? Who talks? How does the behavior of children compare with that of your siblings? Are there more, fewer, or different rules? How do family members express approval, delight, anger?

4 WHEN TRAVELING BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION observe how you hail a bus or taxi. Do you need correct change? What is considered an unreasonably large bill to give? Do you tip? What do you say during these transactions? How do you excuse yourself when you make a mistake?

Can you:

- Ask for and receive street directions?
- Give an address (to a taxi driver)?
- Ask a bus driver to tell you when it's your stop (when to get off)?
- Ask for a bus transfer?



INFORMATION

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

KINSHIP

Areas for Exploration:

- how families are organized
- how people are related
- roles and authority
- genealogy
- lines of succession
-

1 DRAW A FAMILY TREE to show how the members of your host family are related. Ask someone in your host family to explain the names and relationship of family members.

KINSHIP

2 THROUGH YOUR OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS, compare your family at home with your host family in some of the following ways:

YOUR FAMILY		HOST FAMILY
	How are decisions made?	
	Who is responsible for upkeep of the house? Inside/Outside?	
	What household responsibilities do children have?	
	Describe the relationships with relatives. Do grandparents live with the family?	
	How does the family spend leisure time?	
	What are important family events and how are they celebrated?	

3 DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY HOW TWO PEOPLE MEET, become engaged, marry, and set up housekeeping. Make a list of vocabulary that refers to the various aspects of weddings, receptions, etc. At what age do people typically marry?

KINSHIP

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

ECONOMY

Areas for Exploration:

- what are occupations of each family member
- who works, who oversees finances
- what products are acquired
- how dispensable are items
- what is costly, what is inexpensive
- how do they prefer to spend their money
-

1 EXAMINE THE CURRENCY and notice any significant scenes or portraits found on the coins and paper money. Ask a member of your host family or community to explain their significance.

2 OBSERVE OR FIND OUT FROM A FRIEND WHAT KIND OF INDUSTRIES ARE IN YOUR TOWN OR AREA. What is produced/grown? Where is it sold? Try to visit one of the local industries.

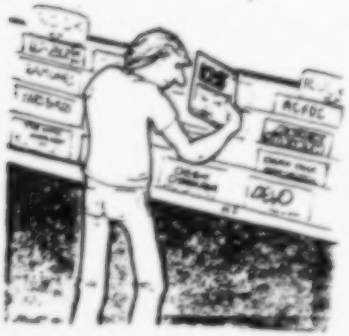
3 DO PEOPLE IN YOUR HOST COUNTRY BARGAIN FOR ITEMS? Ask someone to help you with bargaining techniques and any necessary expressions in the new language.

ECONOMY

4 LIST OCCUPATIONS that you have observed people working at since you arrived.

OCCUPATION (IN YOUR OWN LANGUAGE)	OCCUPATION (IN YOUR NEW LANGUAGE)	WHAT JOB INVOLVES (DESCRIBE IN NEW LANGUAGE)

Interview people about their jobs. What do they like most/least?



5 WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DOES YOUR FAMILY USUALLY BUY? Which are necessities? Which are luxuries? Where do teenagers get their spending money? How do they spend it? What do people do to splurge or celebrate?

ECONOMY

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

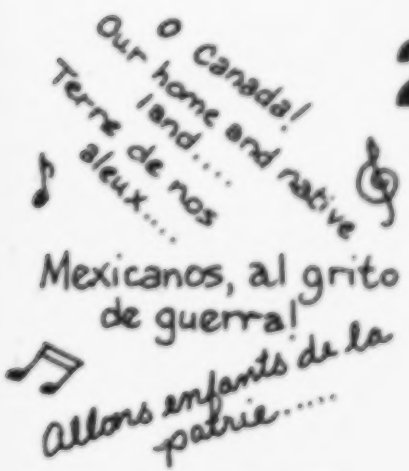
What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

POLITICS

Areas for Exploration:

- national and local government
- national and local laws
- political affiliations
- who/what groups have power and authority
- how people view the government

1 FIND OUT FROM PEOPLE of varying ages, sex, educational backgrounds, and religious convictions whom they consider the nation's heroes and heroines. Why are these people admired.



2 LEARN THE WORDS OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM, pledge of allegiance and other well-known national mottos. Investigate the background of each. When are they used? Where? By whom? What is the significance of the words? Are there comparable sayings used in your homeland?

POLITICS

3 FIND OUT ABOUT ANY POLITICAL MEETINGS in your community and see if you can attend. (Consider your host family's opinion, safety, etc.) Of interest might be: the polls on election day; a protest, demonstration or rally concerning a particular cause; school board meetings; legislative sessions . . .

4 LOOK FOR EXPRESSIONS OF POLITICAL OPINION IN THE MEDIA: Check editorials. Who reads different newspapers? How reliable is reporting considered to be (by whom)? How influential are each in forming public opinion?

5 LOOK FOR REFERENCES TO GOVERNMENT IN POPULAR MUSIC, talk shows, literature, and comedy, etc. How open/critical/exaggerated etc. are these? What issues/individuals are mentioned most?

What do your observations suggest about free speech and the relationship of people to government in your host country?

POLITICS

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

RELIGION

Areas for Exploration:

- religious groups and their beliefs
- celebrations and observances
- attitudes and beliefs concerning the supernatural and the spiritual
- how your family views other religious groups
-

1 ATTEND A LOCAL RELIGIOUS SERVICE. Observe the building and its significant features. Observe the rituals. What objects are used in the service? Do any of these appear in your host family home?

2 WHAT RELIGION IS YOUR HOST FAMILY? In what ways is it similar to or different from your own? Ask a member of your family or a friend about their religion: what does she or he believe? What religious ceremonies are observed during the year? How? What religious holidays are observed? How? What is his or her attitude toward other religious groups?

3 THROUGH OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS, IDENTIFY IN WHAT WAY RELIGIOUS BELIEFS INFLUENCE PEOPLE in their everyday lives. What is the government's relation to religious practice? How does it affect educational institutions?

RELIGION

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

ASSOCIATIONS

Areas for Exploration:

- health systems
- educational systems
- holidays/traditions
- sports and games
-
-

1 VISIT A SCHOOL. Compare it with a school in your own country in the following ways:

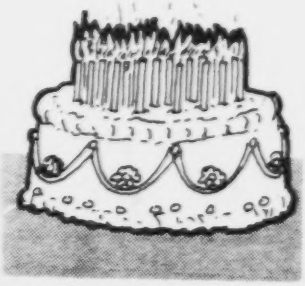
HOSTS		HOME
	Size of Classes	
	Dress	
	Class Atmosphere	
	Teacher/Student Relationship	
	Seating Arrangement	
	Other	

How is the educational system organized? How is it paid for? What percentage of the population finishes grade school, high school, college?

ASSOCIATIONS

2 WHERE DOES YOUR FAMILY GO FOR HEALTH CARE? What home remedies do they recommend? What proverbs are commonly used that typify their attitude toward health? What is the attitude of people toward pain and suffering? What are typical recurring health problems within your host country?

3 HOW ARE HOLIDAYS CELEBRATED? Birthdays? Namedays? Are there special songs, gifts, greetings, food and rituals? What is the significance of each of these occasions?



HOW DO YOU ACT when associating with people in an official capacity (customs officers, policemen, etc.) Are there special titles of address, forms of speech, "bribes" or tips which are expected in certain situations?

4

ASSOCIATIONS

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Some people place a great deal of importance on their past. This is often true in societies which maintain a great deal of tradition. In other cultures, people may not place as much value on the past as they do on the future. What people value is often reflected in many ways.

Areas for Exploration:

- family history and traditions
- historical spots in your town
- museums and tourist attractions
-
-

1 FIND OUT what your family members know about their own past. What do they know about the history of their town? About their country?

2 LOOK FOR signs of how history is preserved in your town. Do they renovate or demolish old buildings? How do they accommodate traffic and parking needs?

3 VISIT any local museums, libraries, tourist attractions. Talk to the curator or librarian. Try to find out what you can about the town from their own knowledge.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

New Vocabulary and Phrases Encountered

Interesting Observations about Language or Culture

What I'd Like to Know More About

What I Learned that I Didn't Expect to

ADAPTING

"I've often thought there ought to be a manual to hand to little kids, telling them what kind of planet they're on . . . called 'Welcome to Earth' . . . and one thing I would really like to tell them about is cultural relativity. I didn't learn until I was in college about all the other cultures, and I should have learned in first grade.

A first grader should understand that his or her culture isn't a rational invention; that there are thousands of other cultures and they all work pretty well; that all cultures function on faith rather than truth; that there are lots of alternatives to our own society. . . . Cultural relativity is defensible, attractive. It's a source of hope. It means we don't have to continue this way if we don't like it.

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is a normal part of living abroad. It is neither bad nor good; it just is. It affects some people more than others. It may affect both you and your host family. What exactly is culture shock?

When you spend your whole life in one culture, you have an unconscious belief that your values, attitudes, and way of perceiving the world are "right." When you live for a time in another culture, your beliefs may come into conflict with people of your host country who, not surprisingly, feel the same way. This conflict will probably not happen immediately or quickly, but will build up so gradually that you may not even notice it at all. Some of the symptoms of culture shock are:

- extreme tiredness
- extreme homesickness
- a tendency to stereotype individuals in the host culture
- a tendency to want to spend all your time with people of your own culture speaking your own language
- reading all day
- extreme boredom and lack of energy
- feeling irritable and confused
- a tendency to talk negatively about the host culture or to blame everything that goes wrong on "them."

HOW'S IT GOING?

Adapting to another culture is usually fun and exciting. But sometimes there are difficult moments too. Think about the cycle of ups and downs since you arrived. What caused these? What can you do to change a difficult moment into an exciting or enjoyable one? What have you done in the past when you're down? Taken a walk . . . talked to a friend? (Review Part II; What to Expect.)

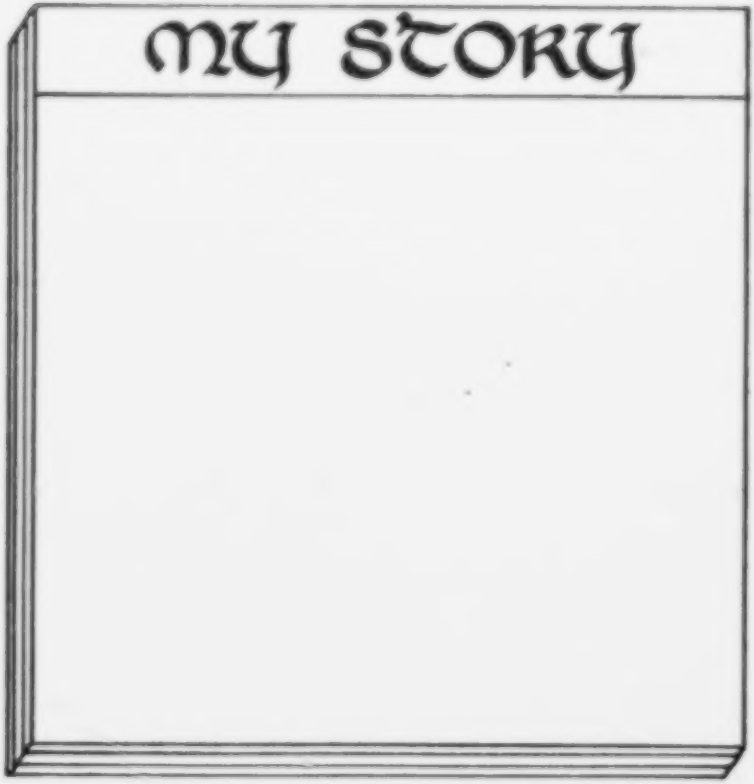
UP						
OK						
DOWN						
DATE			MID-POINT			

TURN A CRISIS INTO AN ADVENTURE! EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED!

MIS/UNDERSTANDING

Choose something that happened to you which illustrates a misunderstanding that took place because of differing cultural attitudes, beliefs, or values.

- What happened?
- Why?
- What did you learn?
- Would you do anything differently next time?



BEYOND

Before you arrived, you probably already had some ideas about your hosts. These ideas were based on readings, movies, TV, and through talks with others who knew something about the culture. Such generalizations are stereotypes which often turn out to be inaccurate. You may already have discovered this for yourself.

Consider any stereotypes you came with and how they may have changed during your stay:

LIST SOME IMPRESSIONS YOU HAD OF YOUR HOSTS BEFORE ARRIVAL.	DO THESE STILL HOLD TRUE?	WHAT DOES A HOST FRIEND THINK ABOUT YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?
Ex: Punctuality isn't important.	Seems true; people always arrive late at parties.	We expect to arrive about 1-1½ hours later than the stated time for parties; after all, the host needs time to get everything ready, but we must be on time for school and business appointments.

STEREOTYPES

LIST SOME IMPRESSIONS YOU HAD OF YOUR HOSTS BEFORE ARRIVAL.	DO THESE STILL HOLD TRUE?	WHAT DOES A HOST FRIEND THINK ABOUT YOUR IMPRESSIONS?

Do this exercise again examining the stereotypes your host family members had of you.

NOTE: Stereotypes which do not change even after direct personal experience are prejudices. Examine any stereotypes which have not changed at all and consider whether these are "pre-judgments" you may still be holding on to.

WELTANSCHAUUNG

A GERMAN WORD EXPLAINED

Literally translated, "Weltanschauung" means "world view" . . . that is, all the attitudes, beliefs and values we have that affect how we perceive what's right and what's wrong in the world. By now, your world view may be changing into a more multicultural one. What is a multicultural world view?

> "The multicultural person recognizes, accepts and appreciates the differences that lie between people of different cultures while accepting the basic unity of all human beings."
>
> Peter Adler
> "Beyond Cultural Identity"

Make a list of cultural similarities and differences between your own and your host cultures. Star the differences that you feel are admirable and that you would like to incorporate into your world view.

Similarities	Differences

MEASURING CHANGE

1. What have you learned about yourself that you didn't know before you left home?

2. What have you learned about your own family and the community where you live?

3. Look at the Field Plan you made in Part II. Did you accomplish your goals?

4. In what one way could the world be a better place? What can you personally do to affect that change?

GOING HOME

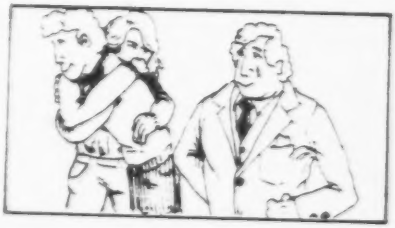
You're about to leave your host family and your host community and return home. You're probably beginning to think ahead to returning to your old way of life.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HOST COUNTRY?

HOW DO YOU PLAN TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR HOST FAMILY?

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO?

- What people?
- What things?
- What places?
- What activities?



WHAT CONCERNS DO YOU HAVE?

- Have changes taken place in family or friends while you were away?
- Have changes taken place in you?
- How will these changes affect your return?

Ithaka

When you set out for Ithaka
ask that your way be long,
full of adventure, full of instruction.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon – do not fear them:
such as these you will never find
as long as your thought is loft, as long as a rare
emotion touch your spirit and your body.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon – you will not meet them
unless you carry them in your soul,
unless your soul raise them up before you.

Ask that your way be long.
At many a summer dawn to enter
– with what gratitude, what joy –
ports seen for the first time,
to stop at Phoenician trading centres,
and to buy good merchandise,
mother-of-pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
and sensuous perfumes of every kind,
sensuous perfumes as lavishly as you can;
to visit many Egyptian cities,
to gather stores of knowledge from the learned.

Have Ithaka always in your mind.
Your arrival there is what you are destined for.
But don't in the least hurry the journey.
Better it last for years,
so that when you reach the island you are old,
rich with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to give you wealth.
Ithaka gave you the splendid journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She hasn't anything else to give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka hasn't deceived you.
So wise have you become, of such experience,
that already you'll have understood what these Ithakas
mean.

C. P. CAVAFY

Part IV

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

(Returning Home)

The Experiment in International Living
Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

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PART IV: Further Developments
(Returning Home)

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GOING HOME AGAIN

You may have heard the expression: "YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN." Many people who have traveled abroad have felt this way. The implication, of course, is not that you can't return home in any physical sense, but simply the recognition that what you return to is not what you left. You have changed (and your family and others may have changed too). Consequently, you may find that the "home" that you took with you in memories no longer matches what you now find.

Even those who have been successful in intercultural situations may find readjusting to home difficult. Surprisingly, returning home requires similar skills to those needed to adjust to the host culture. One of those skills is your ability (and willingness) to "communicate" your experience and feelings so that others can understand.

Now is also a time to consider new perspectives you may have developed. So often, as a result of an intercultural experience, we tend to emphasize differences between our home and host cultures by saying "at home we . . . and over there they. . . ." Although such contrasts may be useful as a starting point, you will probably move beyond them to a broader perspective which recognizes both the distinctive aspects of each culture and the common elements of our human experiences. This would be the beginning of a truly global perspective.

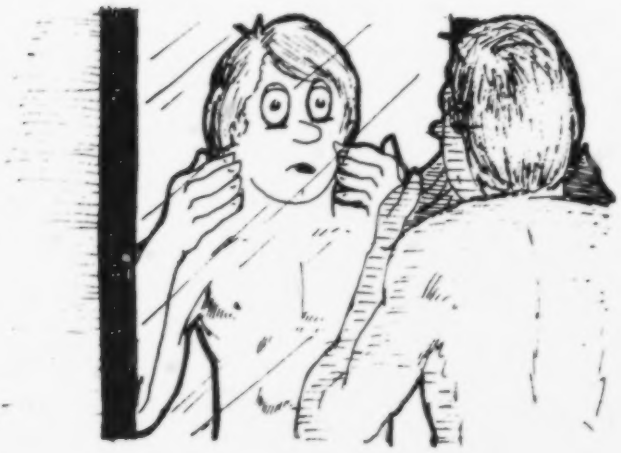
Part IV, Returning Home, has three parts:

How Have I Changed?
Adjustment
Global Perspectives

HOW HAVE I CHANGED?

"I am very pleased in the changes in myself; I expected to change in the program, but did not realize that I would be able to see the changes so concretely."

Elisabeth Stitt
Experimenter to Germany,
1983



A lot has probably happened while you were away. It may be useful to take some time now to examine changes you have undergone and the way these changes affect you and your interactions with others.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

During the first days of your return home, you will be able to see old familiar things with your "new eyes." Things you had always taken for granted may now strike you as: surprising, amazing, unusual, strange. . . .

Jot down some of these "first" impressions and how you feel about them while they are fresh in your mind:

Some First Impressions	How I Feel About Them

What are some things your family and friends have noticed about you after your return? What comments have they made?

Who Said It	What They Said

THEN AND NOW

In the space below, draw a picture or write something that represents you when you arrived abroad. Then draw or write something that represents you now.

Arrival Abroad	*Return Home*

* What major changes have taken place?

* How do these changes affect your return home? Your relations to family and friends? Your adjustment to school and your own culture?

THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE

"I have grown up--I can't really say why now, but perhaps I will know a little later when I can look on my experience as a whole. I am more willing to try new things. I now look at responsibilities not as a burden, but as an aspect of my independence."

Deborah DeFuria,
Experimenter to Italy, 1983

1. Through this experience, one of the most important things I discovered about myself is _____ _____.

2. One of the most important things I discovered about how to get along with people from other backgrounds is _____ _____.

3. A personal attitude or characteristic that has changed as a result of this experience is _____ _____.

4. One thing about people in my host community that I came to accept with much difficulty is _____ _____.

5. For me the single most difficult aspect of living in another family and community has been _____ _____.

FOCUS ON CHANGES

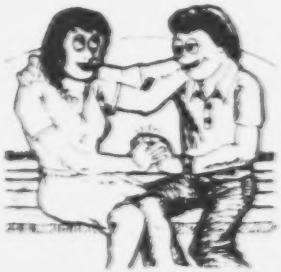
Put a checkmark by any statements that describe how you have changed.

___ I speak a foreign language better.
___ I know more about another culture.
___ I'm more willing to try new things.
___ I understand the values and lifestyles of my home community better.
___ I am more responsible.
___ I can see my own problems in a broader, more realistic context.
___ I am more willing to share my thoughts and feelings with others.
___ I'm willing to accept other people's way of doing things, even when it's not my way.
___ I am more confident when meeting new people.
___ I am more willing to put myself in someone else's place when making judgments.
___ I am willing to face problems and try to solve them.
___ I understand more fully my own strengths and weaknesses.
___ I am able to ask for help from others.
___ I have a greater respect and appreciation for my natural family.
___ I am willing to take risks and make mistakes.
___ I am able to learn about people and situations by listening and observing.
___ I am able to maintain my sense of humor in difficult situations.
___ I am more confident about the decisions I make.
___ I have a better understanding of problems and issues that affect people throughout the world.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT? EVERYTHING!

In your absence some things may have changed back home. Think about the following:

Have clothing or hair styles changed while you were away? What new records or movies are popular?



Have any friends or family members moved during your absence? What other significant changes have taken place in the lives of others whom you are close to?

Walk around your town. Are there any new stores or businesses? Have any old buildings been torn down or renovated?

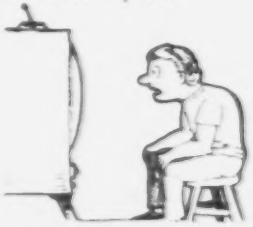
What new words or expressions are your friends using that have become popular since you left?

Cat's Pajamas
FAR OUT
Totally Awesome!

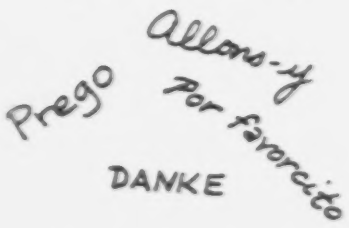
WHAT'S DIFFERENT? ME!

Although there may have been changes in things and people around you, the biggest change may be that you now see things with "new eyes."

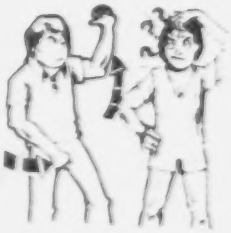
Watch international news on T.V. or read a newspaper. How has your perception of world events changed because of your stay in another country?



You probably learned a lot of your new language while living with your host family. Are there foreign words that you find you now use mixed with your native language?



Are there any gestures you picked up in your host country that you still use now that you are home? Have you noticed any strange reactions to these from family and friends?



Do you have a different attitude toward punctuality? Toward noise? Toward touching? Toward food?

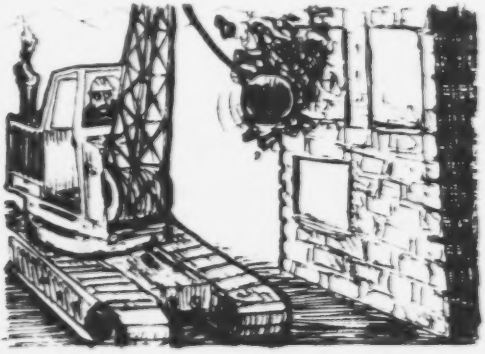
Notes

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY . . . Many people find that although they returned home their intercultural experience may not be over. In fact, it may have just begun!

ADJUSTMENT

"Returning home was much harder than coming to the U.S. The first two weeks at home were awful. Everything my friends or family did seemed unimportant compared to what I could tell or do. The same thing went for my school. It was hard returning there and just being nobody special. And while I felt all this, I missed my American family, friends, school more than anything. That life I had enjoyed so much had suddenly disappeared."

Heinrich Munkholm
Danish Experimenter to the U.S.



Adjustment upon your return home is often seen as the most difficult result of living in another country. This seems strange because you would assume you are returning to the familiar. However, those at home have not had your experiences and may not fully appreciate your new perspectives. The way you view changes in your attitudes and actions can have a great effect on the ease of your adjustment.

IT MAY BE HARD

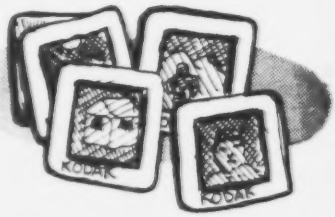
Sometimes it's hard for family and friends to understand all the experiences you have had on your homestay. This may not be because of lack of interest but because of lack of knowledge about your host country. Think of some concrete ways to share your experience.

YOU CAN:

-- Show slides, photos, or postcards. Arrange them by theme or topic.

-- Introduce them to music of your host country. Teach a dance that you learned.

-- Make a typical dish that you liked in your host country and share it with your family.



IF YOU STILL HAVE DIFFICULTIES:

-- Find others who have had homestays and share your feelings. You'll probably find they have experienced the same things.

-- Write your homestay family and explain your problems in readjusting to your own community.

-- Write down your readjustment experiences and send them to your exchange organization to share with others in the future.

WHAT ELSE?????

COUSIN MAUDE'S

DEAR ADDIE: When I returned home from France everyone asked me about my homestay experience. But before I could answer, they began telling me about Cousin Maude's wedding or the movies they'd seen since I had been gone. At first I thought they were interested in my experience, but now I just don't know.

"Uninterested in Cousin Maude"

DEAR UNINTERESTED: Your family and friends may never have had an experience like yours. Be patient. Listen to their events of interest. After all, they want to share what happened to them as much as you want to share your new experiences. When you talk about your summer, show them pictures or souvenirs to help make your experience more real to them.

DEAR ADDIE: My host family was just wonderful and I've tried to share my impressions of them with my own family. However, when I start telling my real family about my homestay family, they always look a little hurt. They wanted me to go on the homestay so why do they act this way?

"Hurt by Hurt Parents"

DEAR HURT: Your family may be a little jealous of the feelings of affection you have developed for another family. Be sensitive to their feelings and make sure they know that your host parents have not replaced them.

WEDDING

DEAR ADDIE: When I got home everyone started asking the dumbest questions about my host country: Did you have electricity? Did the people dress in tiger skins? I'm so disgusted with their ignorance, I don't want to talk to them anymore. What can I do to make them understand?

"Clothed in Skins"

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SKINS?

DEAR ADDIE: My homestay parents treated me like an adult. I drank wine with dinner and I didn't have a curfew. Now my real parents insist that I come home from dates by 11:00 p.m. and, of course, there's no wine with meals. They think I'm still . . .

"A Baby"

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO BABY?

DEAR ADDIE: Yesterday I went to a fast food restaurant with some friends. It was the first time I had been there since I returned from my homestay. I used to love the place but after two months in a different culture, I'm really disgusted with all the waste at the restaurant. Now I don't want to go there anymore, yet I don't want to lose my friends. What can I do?

"Burger Sick"

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO BURGER SICK?

THINK OF YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES AND WRITE SOME "DEAR ADDIE" LETTERS TO DESCRIBE YOUR ADJUSTMENT ISSUES.

RE-ENTRY:

There are several typical behavior patterns among people returning home. These are similar to those which are often displayed when you first enter the host culture:

Alienation — You may react negatively to your home culture, rejecting its attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior patterns. In this case, it is important to realize that you may have become so accustomed to the new environment that you do not realize that you are again in a state of transition and are experiencing the stress of re-adjustment.

Reversion — You may deny important personal changes that have taken place and immediately fit back in as the same person as before you left. This is inadvertently reinforced by those around you, since this is the person they remember before your trip.

Integration — You may try to integrate your changes into the home environment and develop a new and expanded identity. In this case, you accept the fact that you are in transition between two cultures and continue to learn through this process as when entering the host culture. An attempt is made to understand the changes that have taken place within yourself and in the home environment. Here, the re-entry can be a growth experience, but often one that involves a lot of doubt and contradictions.

A VARIETY OF OPTIONS

Becoming Bilingual-Bicultural

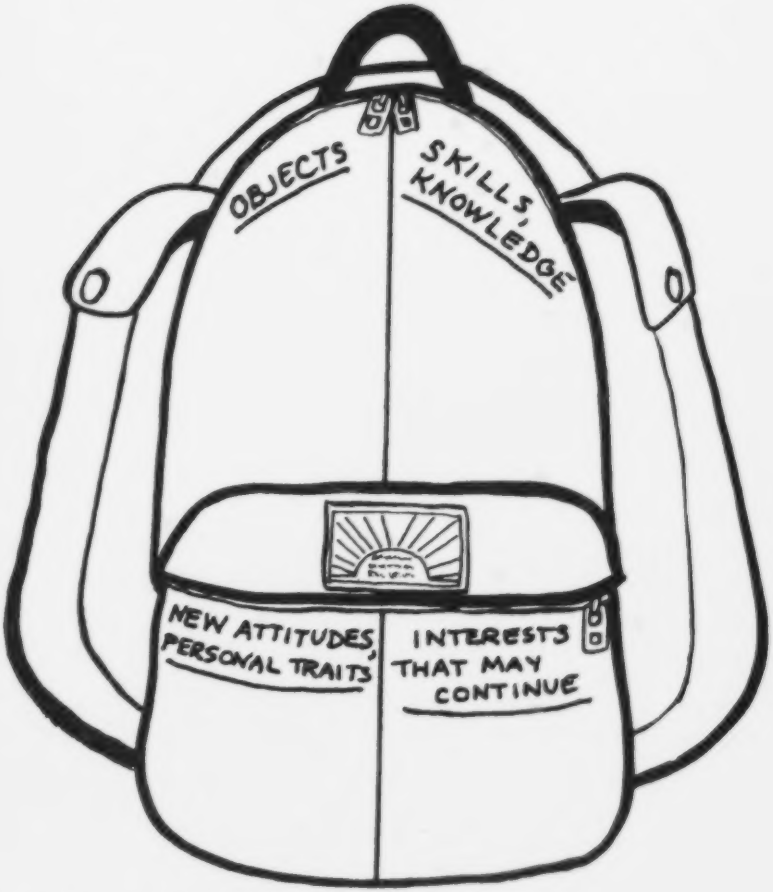
You recognize that there are different ways of behaving, each depending on the culture. While abroad, you tried to act in ways that were acceptable to your hosts and at home you behaved in ways acceptable to your family and friends. In each case you are seen as an acceptable member of each culture, often to the extent that people forget you are capable of speaking and interacting in other ways.

Multilingual/ Multicultural

You are aware of the various cultural dimensions between and among cultures. You recognize the interdependent nature of the world and strive to maintain a broad perspective of the multicultural aspects of people's activity.

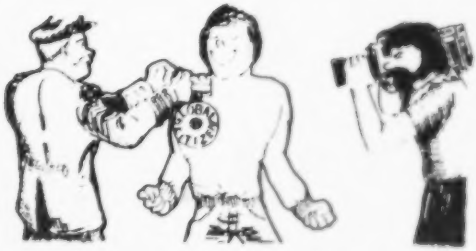
It's important to recognize that how you react when you return to your own culture is affected by two things: your expectations of yourself (your individual identity) and the expectations of you by your family and friends (your group identity). There may be tension between the two because of your need to be yourself and perhaps a conflicting need to be accepted as part of the group.

WHAT I BROUGHT HOME

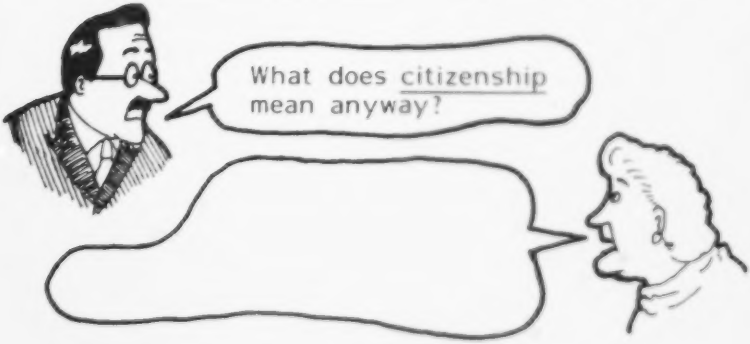


How can these objects, skills, attitudes and interests help you re-enter your home culture and help you adjust to new situations that you might encounter in the future?

ME: A GLOBAL CITIZEN!



"Our true nationality is mankind."
H.G.Wells



One thing you may have developed as a result of living abroad is a more global perspective.

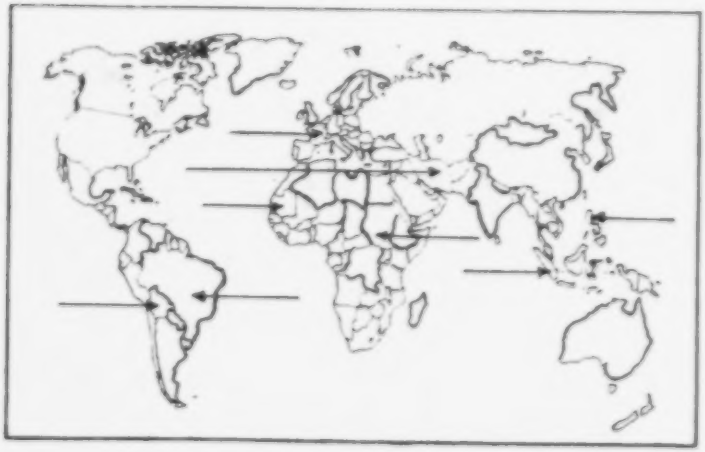
* How has your international experience affected your view of yourself as a member of the global community?

* How might your international experience continue to influence you throughout your life?

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Not everyone has had the opportunity to live with a family in another country; yet, improved communications and transportation coupled with the increased volume of international trade means that we are in contact daily with people, events and objects from all over the world.

Unfortunately, this growing interdependence between countries has not always led to increased understanding and cooperation. Lack of knowledge could be part of the answer. Each of us has a responsibility to educate ourselves about our world neighbors. As a start, test <u>your</u> knowledge. How many of these countries can you identify?



INTERNATIONAL LINKS

"Awakened by a Japanese clock radio . . .
a Swiss watch provides a double-check on the time.
morning coffee from Brazil . . .
ride to work in a Fiat . . .
on Tires made of Malayan rubber . . .
while listening to the Beatles . . .
on a German-made radio . . .
buying Saudi-Arabian gas . . ."

Chadwick F. Alger[1]

See how many objects you use every day come from other countries. Look at:

-- the labels in your clothes
-- the cars in your school parking lot
-- the food in your family's kitchen
-- your family's T.V., stereo, and appliances

Look at the following list of commonly used items and draw lines from each item to the country where the headquarters of the company is located.[2]

ITEM	COUNTRY
1. Sony Walkman	a. France
2. Pepsodent toothpaste	b. Japan
3. Rossignol skis	c. England
4. Volvo	d. Brazil
5. Nestle's chocolate	e. Italy
6. Raleigh bicycle	f. Germany
7. Rockport shoes	g. United States
8. Lipton soup	h. The Netherlands
9. Bayer aspirin	i. Sweden
10. Minolta camera	j. Switzerland
11. Levi jeans	
12. Shell oil	
13. BIC pen	
14. Fiat	

1,b; 2,h; 3,e; 4,i; 5,j; 6,c; 7,g; 8,c; 9,f; 10,b; 11,g; 12,h; 13,e; 14,e.

SPACESHIP EARTH

What would you do?

Just for a moment, imagine that you are a first-class passenger on a huge spaceship with thousands of passengers travelling through space at a speed of 66,000 mph. You discover that the craft's environmental system is faulty. Passengers in some sections are actually dying due to the emission of poisonous gases into their oxygen supply. Furthermore, you learn that there is a serious shortage of provisions--food supplies are rapidly diminishing and the water supply, thought previously to be more than adequate, is rapidly becoming polluted due to fouling from breakdowns in the craft's waste and propulsion systems.

To complicate matters even more, in the economy sections where passengers are crowded together under the most difficult of situations it is reported that many are seriously ill. The ship's medical officers are able to help only a fraction of the sick and medicines are in short supply.

Mutinies have been reported, and although some of the crew and passengers are engaged in serious conflict in one of the compartments, it is hoped that this conflict is being contained successfully; however, there is widespread fear as to what may happen if it cannot be contained or resolved within that area.

The spacecraft has been designed with an overall destruct system, the controls of which have been carefully guarded. Unfortunately the number of technologists who have gained access to the destruct system has increased, and all of the crew and passengers have become uneasy due to evidences of mental instability in some of those gaining such access.

We could go on, but the point is: What would you do put in such a position? Now that you have "imagined" this situation, are you ready to face reality? You are on such a spaceship right now--Spaceship Earth! What are you going to do about it?

GLOBAL ISSUES

"Demographic, economic, political and environmental world trends have combined in recent years to create a qualitatively different class of unavoidable world-level problems that were virtually unknown to traditional diplomacy; that are beyond the reach of national governments; that cannot be fitted into accepted theories of competitive interstate behavior; that are coming increasingly to dominate world affairs; that cannot be wished away; and that are indifferent to military force."

President's Commission on
World Hunger, 1980

Here is a list of some global issues. Add others which interest you.

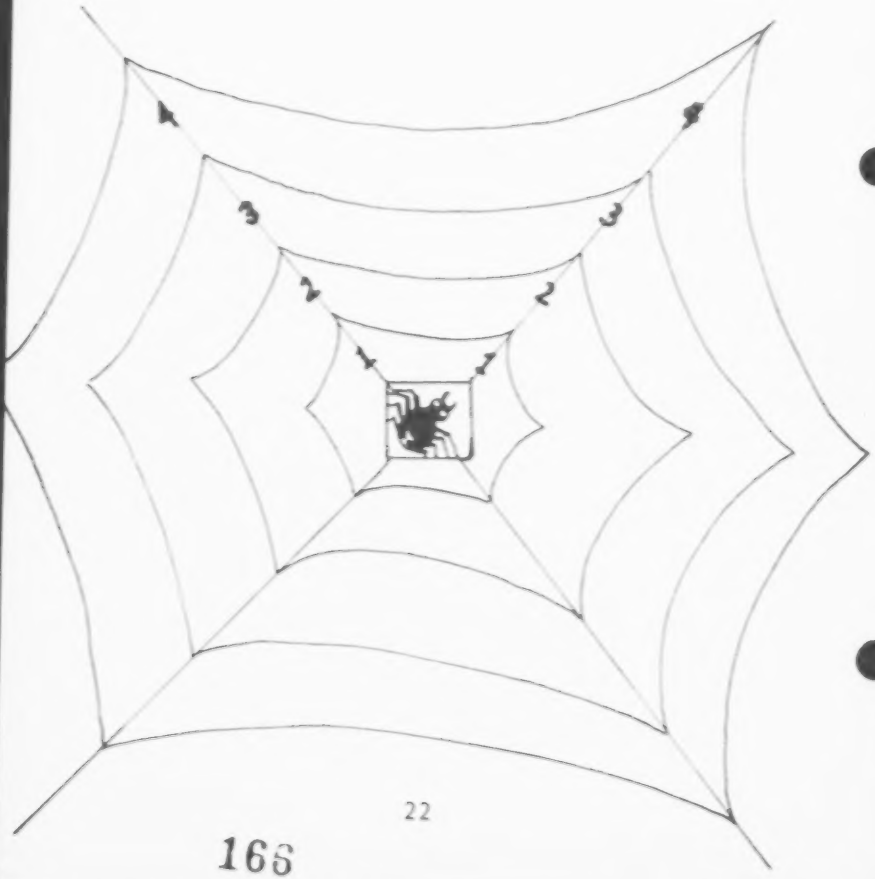
-- Human rights
-- Environmental protection (preservation of lands and wildlife; pollution, etc.)
-- Over-population
-- Threat of nuclear annihilation
-- Racism
-- Poverty
-- Depletion of natural resources (oil, coal, wood)
-- Inadequate health care
--

If you are interested in contacting organizations committed to effecting positive change in any of the above areas, your local library can probably supply you with names and addresses.

THE WEB

"Most people don't realize that we are all one--that whatever I do is going to affect someone living in Tokyo, or New York, or Rio. It's like a great spider web. When you make a movement over here, it's felt vibrationally across to the other end of the web. Everything we do affects the world."

Lynn Andrew, East-West Journal [3]



THE WEB

1. Fill in the innermost circle (1) of the web with four global issues that are important to you.
2. In the next circle (2), give one way in which each issue affects your life.
3. In the next circle (3), give one way in which the issue affects your community.
4. In the outermost circle (4), give one way in which each issue affects the world.

> No man is an island, entire of itself.
> Every man is a piece of the continent.
> John Donne

→ What can world governments do to solve these problems?

→ What can people in your community do to solve these problems?

→ WHAT CAN YOU DO?

WHAT DOES A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE REQUIRE?

-- Knowledge of the world and its cultures

-- An on-going interest in political issues and international problems

-- An ability to respect differences and see similarities among world cultures (a multi-cultural world view)

-- Involvement in local community action groups committed to effecting change in a constructive way.

-- What else??

--

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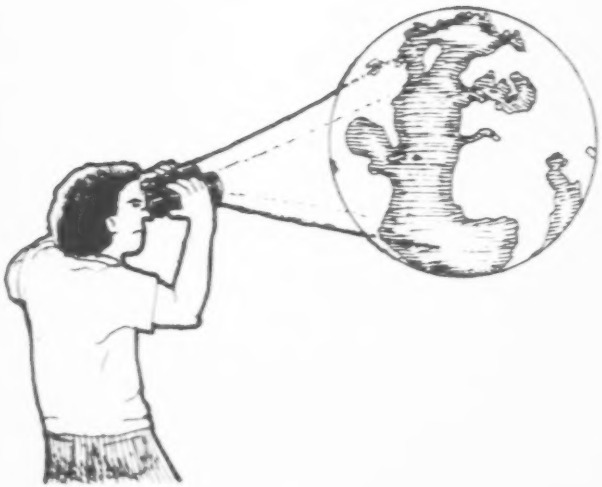


THINK GLOBALLY: ACT LOCALLY

What can you do?

-- Offer to give a slide show and talk at your school, church, or for a community group

-- Become a linguistic/cultural resource in a foreign language class at your school; ask the teacher if you can help out by:

- giving a short oral speech in your host language on your host family or other aspect of your host culture
- taking the part of a host national in roleplays
- giving a lesson in current slang
- teaching a song, dance, or game you learned while living with your host family

-- Act as a host or translator when foreigners visit your school or community

-- Write letters to newspapers or government officials voicing your opinion

-- Continue your international education through reading, travel, or more formal study

-- Keep up your international ties. Write letters to your host family and friends. They'll love to hear from you!

Other ideas?

Footnotes

[1]Chadwick F. Alger, "Liberating Publics to Perceive, Evaluate and Control the International Dimension of their Daily Lives," Program in Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, Mershon Center (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, pp. 37-38).

[2]Activity adapted from Kenneth Switzer and Charlotte Redden, Teaching About Diversity: Latin America, Center for Teaching International Relations (Denver, Colorado: University of Denver, 1982, p. 131).

[3]East-West Journal (Boston, Ma.: Kushi Foundation, Inc., June, 1984).

LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER
BY LIVING TOGETHER

If one person can be trained to understand and to work with the people of other countries, the world— by this single relationship— is an infinitesimal step closer to a state of peace... An intercultural exchange aims to give the individual a vivid experience with his own problems in international cooperation. Living with a family abroad provides this opportunity. Here, experience is the teacher; a home, the classroom. Whether he "passes" or "fails" he alone decides... Turning a "foreigner" into a friend is a difficult undertaking; yet the rewards far outweigh the effort.

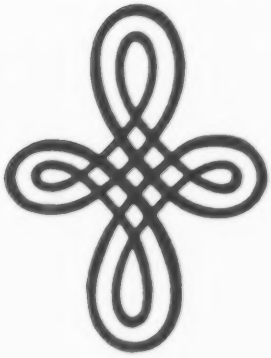
DONALD WATT, Founder
THE EXPERIMENT IN
INTERNATIONAL LIVING

INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE SERIES:

GETTING THE WHOLE PICTURE

A Field Guide
to Language Acquisition and Culture Exploration

APPENDIX I: About Language and Culture



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APPENDIX I: About Language and Culture

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CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Culture

Someone once said, "If you want to know about water, don't ask a fish." This is also a way of saying that we take our own culture and language for granted. We don't normally think about either in a conscious manner. However, when we travel abroad, we come face to face with the basic issues of culture and language, and we find that we think about both a lot.

There have been many attempts to define culture. Any of these definitions will help explain why culture suddenly becomes a matter of great concern when we travel to another country:

1. A common anthropological definition is:

   "Culture is the historically created design for living, explicit and implicit, which exists at any given time, as a potential guide for the behavior of people."

2. Culture has also been described as:

   "A silent language buried in the depth of the unconscious mind, but present as an out-of-awareness motivation for every action, thought and every word ever initiated by man." 1

3. Another description of culture is:

   "Culture is an integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society. Culture refers to the total way of life of particular groups of

people. It includes everything that a group of people thinks, says, does and makes--its customs, language, material artifacts and shared systems of attitudes and feelings. Culture is learned and transmitted from generation to generation." 2

From these definitions, we can see that some key aspects of culture are.

1. Culture is created by people.

2. It exists in time and space, i.e., in an environment in which human beings act and react upon their space, the time dimension, themselves and others.

3. It has several components:

   a. that which is made (artifacts),

   b. the ways in which people organize their society (sociofacts), and

   c. the ideas, beliefs and values which people hold (mentifacts).

   Together these components of culture--of any culture--would consist of at least the following:

Manners	Tools
Customs	Social institutions
Beliefs	Religious beliefs
Ceremonies	Myths and legends
Rituals	Knowledge
Laws (written and unwritten)	Values
	Concept of Self

Ideas and Thought patterns	Models
Language	Ideals
Arts and Objects	Accepted ways of behaving

4. The whole of culture is greater than the sum of its individual parts, and the parts are completely interrelated. We can say that a tool (artifact) involves the custom (sociofact) for the use of that tool, and that the custom involves the idea (mentifact).

5. Culture is learned. It is not, like racial characteristics, genetically transmitted. We learn to speak, think and act the way we do because of the people who surround us.

Language

Language is also taken for granted in our daily lives. We spend most of our lives using language in our interactions, often without giving conscious thought to this act. This changes dramatically the moment we enter another culture. Perhaps for the first time, we realize how significant language is to most of the things we do. We find that our knowledge of the target language (or lack of it) has a tremendous impact on how well, and if, we can communicate, as well as upon the way others perceive us.

A common linguistic definition of language is:

> "Language is a learned and arbitrary system of symbols through which people interact and attempt to communicate in terms of their common cultural experiences."3

Key aspects of language then are:

1. It is learned. If we were born among Japanese speakers we would speak Japanese as naturally as we speak our native tongue.

2. We use symbols to convey infinite meanings. In other words, symbols stand for what we mean. We should not confuse the symbol with the real thing. A map stands for the terrain, but it is not the terrain itself, just as a word stands for what is signified, but it is not the actual thing.

3. An arbitrary relation exists between the symbol and the thing signified. This means that meaning is bestowed on a symbol, and this is an artificial designation. There is no intrinsic relationship between words and what they represent:

   "chair" and the object h

   or

   "gato" (Spanish) and the animal

   Any symbol can be given any meaning.

4. Once meaning is ascribed, however, people interact and attempt to communicate by using conventional symbols in fairly conventional ways. That is, once meaning is ascribed, people generally tend to act in accordance with the common meaning bestowed upon the symbol. We don't usually question the meaning of a symbol, nor the symbol itself, but accept it as it is.

5. Language is social behavior, i.e., it involves two or more persons in an interaction.

6. It involves a complex of skills which must be practiced physiologically. The ear, the vocal cords, the eye and the hand must all be trained.

7. Language is also a mental process. It is not only what is written on paper, nor that which is said and heard. It is also that which is never articulated, a stream of consciousness.

8. It is a factor in personality. It is the way we behave, feel and express ourselves, and identify the world around us.

9. Language is a fine art. It has esthetic value and may be used with more or lesser skill in poetic ways. It affects the human emotions and is encumbered with value judgments.

Communicative Competence

The term "communication" or "communicative competence" is often used instead of "language" because it is a broader concept. Language usually means the linguistic aspect of communication, whether spoken or written. However, communicative competence includes other dimensions of our communication ability. Significant components are:

Linguistic and para-linguistic component

Extra-linguistic, or non-verbal component

Socio-linguistic, or variational component

Whereas the linguistic includes the sounds, words and grammar of language, the para-linguistic refers to the speed, volume, pitch, tone and other "affective" aspects of one's speech. Grammar books and texts usually describe the linguistic aspects of our communication ability. The para-linguistic aspects are apparent when we speak, and they convey information about each speaker (age, sex, state of health, etc.) as well as information about his or her emotional state (happy, sad, upset, etc.). As native speakers

of our language, we learn not only how to put our language together, but to interpret the messages which the para-linguistic dimension communicates.

The extra-linguistic component refers to our non-verbal behavior. Non-verbal interaction includes a variety of areas:

1. touching patterns (haptics)

2. eye contact (oculesics)

3. use of space (proxemics)

4. use of body movement and gestures (kinesics)

5. response to body and other odors (olfactics)

6. the pattern of timing in an interaction (chronemics)

Like language, non-verbal behavior is also patterned in ways specific to each culture. Like language, this is also learned and forms part of the way we communicate. It is erroneous to assume that we can successfully transfer non-verbal systems across cultures.

Speaking another language is not simply saying different words, but also interacting in different ways.

A third component of communication competence is the way we vary both language and non-verbal behavior in each situation. This ability reflects the socio-linguistic or variational component, acknowledging that our way of speaking and behaving is not monolithic and invariant. Rather we adjust both to each social circumstance as appropriate. And "appropriate" is the key to the concept since what is appropriate is culturally determined. What

is considered appropriate speech and behavior in one culture may not be equally appropriate in another.

This is an area in which culture and language are most obviously interrelated. To know how to speak and behave appropriately, involves knowledge of the social factors which govern the continual modifications in our manners. We know this intuitively in our own culture. For example, we know when and how to speak and behave appropriately in a classroom, in a church, in a doctor's office, in a bar, and so forth. We also know there are varying ways to speak and behave when talking with children, our parents, an employer, the clergy, or when we speak with family members as opposed to strangers on the street. Some social factors which commonly (although not always) affect speech and behavior are:

- where the conversation takes place (the setting)
- who is involved (the speakers and their characteristics, such as age, sex, relationship, role, etc.)
- the topic of conversation (discussing homework, speaking about religion, gossip)
- the form (a public speech, a common conversation, storytelling, etc.)

Learning to identify the situations and the communication styles appropriate to each is part of the challenge when entering a new culture.

Diversity within Culture

As we try to understand culture and to seek the common themes, we recognize that there is also diversity among the individuals who share that common culture. Each person is a cultural being. Our individual worlds are tinted with our shades of cultural heritage, background, and experiences. So,

even when we tend to describe cultures in rather broad ways at first (often by nationality or country), we must also recognize that the individuals in a society/culture are diverse (heterogeneous), based on many other considerations:

* city dwellers and country people
* male and female
* ethnic groups and mainstream society
* single and married
* religious groups
* socioeconomic and political groups
* special interests (sports enthusiasts, bird-watchers, stamp collectors)
* recent immigrants and second or third generations

How would the world views differ between someone living in downtown Manhattan and someone from Ames, Iowa? How would beliefs differ between a Christian and a Buddhist? And within each of the groups cited, individuals each interpret and express themselves in their own personal way:

"Just because your sister likes baseball, doesn't mean you do or will!"

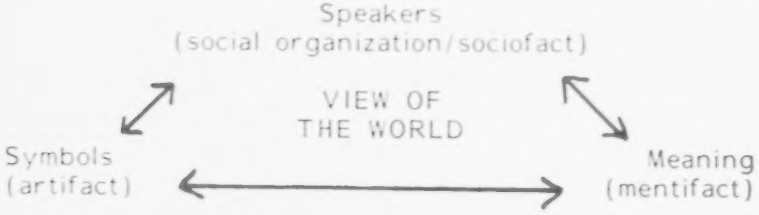
In an effort to define other cultures, one may over-generalize certain characteristics believed to be indicative of one group. Often these are images derived from the media and from our own cultural perspective. Someone outside the U.S., for example, may think that all Americans chew gum, or all Americans are materialistic.

The tendency to try to standardize or oversimplify another culture is called stereotyping. Stereotypes which persist despite new information, or information to the contrary, are prejudices.

Culture, Language and World View

Since language is learned and socially created, it is also an aspect of culture. Culture in turn includes language, yet is a component of language. The two, in fact, are so interlinked, that it is difficult to separate culture and language, or conversely, to show how they are interrelated. Yet the specific language one speaks is a significant factor in determining the view one has of the world. Language both affects and reflects the world view of people. It influences perception, cognition and our ways of relating to each other and to reality.

This interrelationship may be illustrated in this way:



In other words, what we think about something (meaning) we express by way of a symbol. Conversely, once acquired, that symbol also influences how we think about the world. The way we organize ourselves socially and what we consider important aspects of our social organization (e.g., sexual differences, age, role, status, etc.) affect the way we speak about things. Different speakers often have different ways of expressing the same thing. All people do not speak alike nor do the same persons speak in the same ways all of the time in all situations. The social circumstances of the speech act affect the way

something is communicated.

All of these considerations--meaning, the choice of symbols, and social organization--constitute the view a group of people hold of the world. Obviously, there are many choices as to how we can organize ourselves socially, the meanings we hold for the world, and the symbols we use, and these vary from culture and language to culture and language. To experience Denmark through English cannot be the same experience qualitatively as to experience Denmark through Danish. Only the Danish language will lead us closer to the world view held by the Danes. Language, then, is a blueprint, a roadmap, a paradigm of the Danish view of things. For this reason, it is said that language both affects and reflects the cultural view which people have of the world.

Have you ever watched clouds with a child or a friend to find that you have seen very different forms represented? And try as they might to outline what they see, you can't quite find the same form? Just a few simple words like: "Do you see that cloud that looks like an elephant . . . it has a long trunk and a tail . . " help you to perceive the precise cluster of clouds which you otherwise might not have discerned. This is the way language works, too. The words we have for things help us to identify those items and "distinguish" them from everything else around us. It is in this way that specific languages guide us to possibly differing perceptual configurations. This is another reason why language is often considered a roadmap or paradigm of our view of the world.

If language is a paradigm of our world view, learning another language should aid our discovery of the view which others hold of the world. Language systems differ in what they acknowledge, how they

segment and classify phenomena, and how we relate to these. Language also regulates the way we interact and behave. The more different a language is from our own, the greater may be the surprises which it holds for us.

So we should be prepared to discover new and exciting possibilities as we learn about other peoples and how they speak about their world. As Don Juan, the Yaqui sorcerer, said to Castaneda, his apprentice, who consistently refuted Don Juan's vision of things:

> Who the hell do you think you are to say the world is so and so . . . just because you think the world is so. Who gave you the authority? . . the world is a marvellous place . . full of mystery and awe.

As you pursue your intercultural experience--no matter where, no matter the host culture--this is the excitement ahead . . . the possibility of uncovering a new view of the world, and in turn, a new understanding of your own.

Footnotes

[1]Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1973).

[2]L. Robert Kohls, Survival Kit for Overseas Living. (Chicago: Intercultural Press, Inc., 1979), p. 17.

[3]Leonard Bloomfield, Language. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1933).

[4]Carlos Castaneda, A Separate Reality. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971).

INTERCULTURAL CONTACT

Entering the Host Culture

As we travel abroad, we anticipate learning a lot about the host culture. What we do not always imagine is how much we will learn about our own culture and ourselves. Like the "fish out of water" it is an experience which causes us to think about what we have always taken for granted. Consequently, learning about other peoples and cultures, is also learning about oneself and one's own culture.

Because we are so unaware of how our own lives are mediated by culture and language, we often find it more difficult than we expect to accept another culture. Despite our recognition of what may be considered appropriate behavior in the host culture, we cling to what we consider "normal" and "natural." We believe that our way of doing things is "superior" or "right." This attitude is called ethnocentrism, a tendency to view one's own culture as a universal way of behaving (looking inward when looking outward). If we hold tightly to ethnocentric views, it makes it all the more difficult to enter a new culture with curiosity and interest, and to be willing to accept other ways of doing things as equally valid possibilities.

Contact between one's own world view and the new may result in a series of adjustments. This entry process into a new culture has been described as a series of stages by various people. Some phases commonly experienced are euphoria (Isn't this wonderful? Isn't this country beautiful? Isn't this town picturesque?), to conflict or shock (Why don't they

speak English? Why do they keep touching me so much? Oh how I wish I could have some of my own food!) A next stage in the adjustment process often involves comparison and evaluation (Why, this isn't really so bad. Actually this is better than what we have back home! I can't figure out whether these teenagers are more mature or less mature than Americans). At a later stage, there may be acceptance of the host culture on its own terms, in which case, judgments are no longer made based on the way things are back home.

Viewing the host culture as an outsider, or from one's own cultural perspective, is often an inaccurate and greatly distorted view (called an etic perspective). In contrast, the view which natives hold of their own culture (an emic perspective) is one which often takes a considerable period of time to acquire aided by appropriate interest and attitude.

As you enter the host culture and learn its language, you may find yourself in transition from your own culture/language to the new. That is, you probably have learned to do new things (behaving and speaking) but your way of behaving and speaking is probably not like that of a native. This interim transitional stage may be called interculture and interlanguage to capture the idea that you are not behaving like you would at home, but neither are you behaving like your hosts.

How far you move toward behaving increasingly like your hosts is up to you. Obviously, a certain degree of adaptation is highly desirable just in terms of being acceptable to your hosts. Whether you desire to behave like them is your choice; on the other hand, whether that is permitted by the host culture is a matter which is not in your control. Your motivation may be viewed as on a continuum, from survival motivation (instrumental motivation as

termed by psychologists) or a motivation to be just like your hosts (integrative motivation), whom you probably admire enormously in the latter case.

In any case, cultural rapport is partially up to you. How far you go in entering and adjusting to your host culture is also up to you. As with any other social encounter, the options include:

1. rejection of the host culture which in turn usually causes rejection of you

2. adaptation to some extent, retaining your identity but adjusting to obvious aspects of the culture

3. integration or assimilation to the host culture, which sometimes means rejection of your own culture, or at least temporary abandonment of it

4. becoming bicultural and bilingual, which assumes that you learn to adapt successfully to each of two cultures and languages so that you are accepted as a member of each by its members.

Integrating Yourself into the Host Culture[1]

One of the ways that your experience may be described is in terms of general patterns of behavior: 1) culture entry adjustment; 2) culture learning, and 3) the re-entry process. A more detailed sequence of these same developmental stages is:

1. Culture Entry Adjustment:

   Stage I: Spectator
   Stage II: Defensive Contact
   Stage III: Recovery

2. Culture Learning:

Stage IV: Establishing bona fide contacts
Stage V: Sorting out meaning
Stage VI: Establishing a Role
Stage VII: Knowledge of Self
Stage VIII: Development of Needed Attributes and Skills
Stage IX: Development of Meaningful Relationships

3. Re-Entry:

Stage X: Post-sojourn Re-entry

As you enter a new culture a period of adjustment is needed. All your familiar signs and symbols of social interaction are gone, and you may begin to feel disoriented and anxious. In your journey overseas and as you read through and progress through these stages, it is important to remember the following points:

1. Development can be described in terms of a progression through a sequence of stages.

2. A stage is identified by a task or tasks which must be negotiated.

3. While the theme of one stage always predominates, several stages may be negotiated simultaneously as you shift back and forth within a certain range of exploration.

4. Your progress will proceed at its own pace though norms may prescribe a time frame for negotiating individual stages or the entire developmental sequence.

5. Although a specific task is identified with each stage in a developmental sequence, you will solve the task problem in your own unique way.

Stage I: Spectator. During your first few days or weeks in a foreign culture you may be insulated from in-depth contact with host nationals and the new cultural environment. You may associate with people who speak your language, and as a guest and tourist you may feel special and elated by the sights and newness of it all. In addition to the cultural insulation which others provide, you too may be fascinated with all the new sights and attractions while inwardly you may be more attuned to noticing the similarities with home than perceiving the differences that contrast with your home culture. These similarities reinforce your sense of cultural identity. Your language facility may be minimal but perhaps adequate for the superficial interactions that are necessary.

Stage II: Defensive Contact. After you have been in the new culture for a period of time and are less insulated and no longer treated as a guest, there may be increasing demands on you to interact with host nationals and to find ways to cope with daily needs. At this point you will begin to notice differences between the home and host culture. Your initial observations, excitement and curious interest now, with more in-depth involvement in this second stage, result in reactions of disbelief, alarm and amazement. The new culture may appear strange, bizarre and incomprehensible and social transactions may become confusing and ambiguous. The continual uncertainty regarding cultural norms and expectations may cause you to feel disoriented and personally inadequate, and just when you need help in establishing interpersonal bonds your language fluency may decline and your ability to solve problems can be at a minimum. As it becomes more difficult for you to cope with all these unpredictable and meaningless events, you may develop a growing sense of being different and isolated. And you may reluctantly assume the role of "foreigner" with all the negative connotations of ostracism and loneliness that that role signifies.

Stage III: Recovery. Before entering this stage you are confronted with a choice--either reduce tension by involving yourself in the culture or reduce tension through retreat to more superficial levels of contact. If you choose to become more involved, then this stage is a period of intense emotions. Things which previously frustrated you and which you blamed on others must now be acknowledged as your own inner conflicts. Also, you may begin to rely less on fantasy reunions with those you love in your home culture and begin to acknowledge the gulf that accompanies the painful separations. As this mourning process occurs you will begin to re-examine relationships with your family and the meaning of previously unquestioned cultural values.

In contrast to the first three stages of cultural entry or "culture shock" the six following stages of culture learning are an adaptive response which requires your active commitment and participation within the host culture. In general, culture learning refers to your process of evolving a new cultural identity as a result of integrating aspects of a new culture while retaining core aspects of your primary cultural identity.

Stage IV: Establishing bona fide contacts. Once your basic survival needs are met, your focus will shift to building relationships and social affiliations. You may experience a strong need to find a friendly host figure who accepts you despite your differentness and provides empathy, feedback and guidance. This feeling of belonging may cultivate a sense of willingness and optimism to initiate new behavior and sustain your morale in the face of failure and ridicule. You need to feel worthy of friendship and take risks in reaching out to strangers.

Stage V: Sorting out meaning. At this stage you become involved in the activities of the new culture and begin the slow process of developing an understanding of the host culture from the perspective of an insider. With the hope of gaining an inside perspective you deliberately enter new social interactions which may precipitate anxiety, failure and censure. To cope with the social blunders and errors which will inevitably occur you'll need humility, a sense of humor and self-confidence.

Stage VI: Establishing a role. In order for you to become a participating member of the new culture you must assume a social role and this must be one acceptable within the new culture. To take on such a role you need to learn the appropriate behavior of that role, and you are forced to acquire a new repertoire of behavior appropriate to the role you'll assume. For example, as a participant in a homestay foreign exchange program you are faced with having to learn the appropriate behavior associated with being a son or daughter, and sister or brother, while living within the particular family system. You will also need to learn to cope with uncomfortable feelings associated with assuming new behaviors and with social pressure to conform as well as feelings of inauthenticity associated with unfamiliar behavior. Aside from the difficulties associated with adopting a new role within the role structure of the second culture, you must also contend with the bicultural role. As you integrate aspects of the second culture and relinquish aspects of your native culture you may lose the ability to fit completely into any one culture for the moment and feel like a hybrid.

Stage VII: Knowledge of self. Your advancement toward greater cultural learning at this point depends upon your ability to experience in depth personal growth. The following areas are components of this growth:

1. Growth in awareness of a personal identity

2. Growth in self-awareness

3. Growth in cultural self-awareness

4. Growth in personal responsibility

Stage VIII: Development of Needed Attributes and Skills. Once you are self-aware and able to function within the new culture, the next step is to begin internalizing attributes from the second culture which will facilitate participation. First you need to become aware of the skills that are needed and next you must commit yourself to the conscious development of the needed attributes and skills.

Perhaps the most obvious of these skill areas might be the language dimension. You may need to progress in language fluency from a serviceable plateau into a realm where you can truly appreciate very subtle nuances.

Stage IX: Developing Meaningful Relationships. Here you are aware of being the product of one primary culture while also being aware of being affected and enlarged by participation in a second culture. Your new skills and adaptive behavior become spontaneous, you feel as if you "belong" and you experience independence. You are able to accept and be nourished by cultural differences and similarities and are able to view yourself and others as individual human beings who are influenced by culture and upbringing. Most important you are capable of undergoing further transition experiences which enable you to continue exploring the diversity of human life.

Stage X: Re-entry. You enter this stage at the

point in your overseas experience in which plans to return to your home culture become imminent. Because this re-entry phase is contingent upon departure plans, it will typically interrupt other stages.

Upon returning home, you may experience an increase in self-confidence combined with an inability to utilize or apply much of what was learned abroad. In re-adjusting to your native lifestyle you may experience role conflict, feelings of aimlessness, sense of disillusionment and inner discontent with popular culture values in your home country. Your re-entry period may be slightly more difficult than the initial entry adjustment and you may devise similar strategies to cope with the stress and the feeling "I'll never fit in here again."

The following issues or tasks might be areas of difficulty for you: a) cultural identity, b) adjustment to changes in lifestyles, c) pressures to conform, d) feelings of superiority due to international experience, e) uncertainty in interpersonal relationships, f) social alienation as a result of the sojourn, g) dissatisfaction with local customs and ritualized patterns, h) frustration as a result of conflicting attitudes, i) feelings of strangeness, j) feelings of isolation, k) unfamiliarity with new styles, l) inability to communicate or apply what has been learned while overseas. Perhaps those skills which you developed in adjusting to the new culture overseas are just the skills you need now to help you re-adjust to your home culture.

Learning Language on Your Own

Most people think that to learn a second language, a teacher, a book, a course is needed. Yet, by comparison there are relatively few people who actually

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acquire a second language in a formal classroom setting. The vast majority of people acquire second languages naturally and fluently all on their own.

In fact, those who have studied foreign languages in school situations often do not attain a significant level of proficiency. This could be due to the method of teaching, the number of hours spent at the activity, the limited language use in a classroom situation. Whatever the reasons, formal study is indeed no guarantee that languages will be learned.

Conversely, being placed in a foreign context, although it provides an immensely rich opportunity to learn a second language, is no guarantee either. Aside from exposure, attitude and motivation play a tremendously important role in the acquisition of a second tongue. Whereas, the child needs a language--any language--to interact and communicate in order to satisfy basic needs, and also "picks up" the language or languages of the environment, the adult learner's needs are affected by his/her attitude toward the speakers of the second language and consequently his/her desire to want to speak it. Hence, language acquisition is closely connected to your feelings about the target culture and your hosts.

The extent to which you admire your hosts (and possibly wish to be like them) may greatly affect your acquisition of the language. At the other extreme, if you are disinterested in your hosts, you may find yourself learning minimal language in order to meet only your most basic needs.

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AN EVALUATION FORM

The Y.O.G.A. Form[1]

Formal language instruction often begins as a process of learning which may continue abroad. The goal should be to help the individual "communicate" in another culture. Consequently, this form, unlike traditional language tests, addresses several areas:

Part I Language Proficiency--This section examines linguistic features such as vocabulary, pronunciation and grammatical control.

Part II Behavioral Performance--which refers to tasks and situations emphasizing what you do with what you have learned, including gestures, body movement, facial expressions and the like, in addition to linguistic skills.

Part III Attitude toward the Host Language and Culture--is considered since your attitude about these directly affects the ease or difficulty with which you learn the language.

This form will help guide you (and your instructors) through your language experience by:

(1) first, defining some objectives to be achieved for communicating in the host culture,

(2) serving as a guideline for observation, directing both learner's and teacher's attention to the learning process;

(3) and finally, by providing an assessment tool to help you as the learner evaluate how far you have progressed toward the stated objectives at various points in time.

Together, these objectives, guidelines and assessment are known as the Y.O.G.A. Form (Your Objectives, Guidelines and Assessment).

When to Use the Form

Since instructional objectives are suggested, students, teachers and trainers should become familiar with these from the outset of a language course. As a guideline, the form may be continually referred to throughout the language course and the experience abroad, as well as after the program if you continue study of the language and culture upon return home.

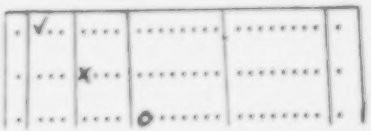
As an assessment tool, the Y.O.G.A. is to be filled out by you and reviewed with the teacher at the beginning and end of the language course. For programs with an in-country component, the procedure should be repeated at the end of the stay abroad. The form is meant to stimulate discussions and feedback among students, teachers and leaders at several critical times during the intercultural experience.

How to use the form

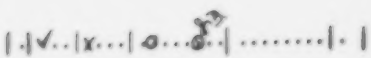
At the beginning of the language program, use a check mark:

At the end of the language program, use an X:

At the end of the stay abroad, use a circle:



If the teacher/leader disagrees with the assessment of an item made by the student, s/he may express that opinion in discussion with the student, adding his/her evaluation to the scale and initialing the addition:



Part I: Language Proficiency

In completing the statements below, think of your language ability; this may include your theoretical as well as your practical knowledge, your fluency and pronunciation as well as your comprehension.

The further you progress, the longer it may take to move from one level to the next on the scale; the dots on the scale are intended to reflect this.

Listening

I can understand the target language when spoken to me at normal conversational speed by a native ... .

At this point of my language learning, I can understand:

- a radio program in the target language ... .
- a TV program in the target language ... .
- a movie in the target language ... .
- a telephone conversation ... .
- songs, jokes in the target language ... .
- a dialogue, an argument, a discussion that includes me ... .
- a dialogue, an argument, a discussion that excludes me ... .
- commands directed at me ... .
- social requests directed at me ... .
- directions given to me ... .
- instructions given to me ... .
- taboo words and euphemisms ... .
- some slang and colloquial expressions ... .
- emergency situations ... .
- "small talk" ... .

At this point of my language learning, I can maintain, successfully,

Like a native speaker; I feel bilingual in all areas.	Very well; I understand nearly everything, and there are only occasional words or expressions that I miss.	Fairly well; I get the gist of what is being said, but still miss any specifics and am unfamiliar with slang and colloquialisms.	Not well at all; ideas have to be repeated to me at a slower pace, or communicated by other means (gestures, pictures, etc.); I miss out on the bulk of the message.	No exposure to the spoken language.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
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. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.
. . . . .	. . . .	. . .	. .	.

At this point of my language learning I can maintain, successfully,

	YES	NO
- a brief exchange on subjects familiar to me	___	___
- a short conversation on selected subjects	___	___
- a short conversation on any subject	___	___
- a prolonged conversation on any subject	___	___

Speaking

I can use a range of vocabulary and expressions in the following areas --

	No calendar/no ability.	Not well at all, but I can.	I can do it with difficulty.	I can do it with little difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- Days, months, seasons						
- Family relationships						
- Parts of the body						
- Parts of the house						
- Articles of clothing						
- Social expressions						
- Interrogatives						

	No ability/no opportunity.	Not well at all, very little.	Hesitatingly, I can do it.	Pretty well, I have little difficulty.	Very well, I have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- Expressions of time/place							
- Cardinal numbers (six, two-faced, four-star)							
- Ordinal numbers (first, second-class, third-rate)							
- Geographic directions							
I can use the following sentences							
- Simple affirmative statements (Yes, I can do it.)							
- Simple negative statements (No, I don't remember.)							
- Simple questions (Do You like it?)							
- Commands (Come back again.)							
I can use slang and colloquial expressions							
Other aspects of oral expression:							
- Pronunciation							
- Intonation							
- Correct word order							
- Fluency							

	Like a native speaker.	Almost native speaker.	Have a good fluency.	Have a lot of difficulty.	Partly real & partly imagined.	Not real at all.	No opportunity/no ability.
Grammatical Features							
I can use the following features of the host language (if applicable to the language in question)--							
- Personal pronouns (I, you/she/us)							
- Verbs - simple present (We speak English)							
- Verbs - present progressive (We are speaking English.)							
- Definite articles (the)							
- Indefinite articles (a,an)							
- Gender and number of nouns (las casas/el libro, in Spanish)							
- Verbs - simple past (I spoke English.)							
- Possessive adjectives (my/your/her)							
- Possessive pronouns (mine/hers/ours)							

	No exposure/no ability.	Not well at all, but I try.	Fairly well; I stumble and hesitate, but I can do it.	Very well; I seem to have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- Noun/adjective case endings (Der gute Mensch/Zu dem guten Menschen, in German)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Prepositions (with/for/at)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Verbs - simple future (She will write a letter.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Verbs - "going to" future (She is going to write . .)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Expressions of time (I'm late. It's now or never.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Noun-verb agreement (Time flies.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Contractions (It is not--it isn't.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Reflexive verbs (levantarse, in Spanish; se souvenir de, in French)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Direct object pronouns (I learned the lesson. I learned it.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Indirect object pronouns (to him, to us)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Verbs--conditional (We would travel if . . .)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.

	No exposure/no ability.	Not well at all, but I try.	Fairly well; I stumble and hesitate, but I can do it.	Very well; I seem to have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- Adjectives--comparative, superlative forms (big, bigger, biggest)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Verbs--imperfect (J'avais 17 ans, in French; Estudiaba siempre, in Spanish)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Relative pronouns (who, which, whose)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Verbs--present perfect (She has writeen a letter every day this week.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Demonstrative pronouns (Those are mine.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Demonstrative adjectives (this table)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Verbs--subjunctive (Il faut que je parte, in French; Espero que te diviertas, in Spanish)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Indirect speech ("I'm going," said Nancy--Nancy said that she was going.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- Passive voice (We all did it.--It was done by all of us.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.

Part II: Behavioral Performance

In completing the statements below, think of your ability to PERFORM each of the tasks cited. Your rankings should indicate whether you have had experience with the situation and what your relative ability to accomplish the task is, as contrasted with the complete ability of a native.

I can--	No exposure/no ability.	Not well at all, but I try.	Fairly well; I stumble and hesitate, but I can do it.	Very well; I seem to have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- ask for or give directions	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- ask and tell time of day/ day of week/date	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- order a simple meal alone	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- talk about the weather	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- purchase food/clothing/train tickets on my own						
- respond to biographical questions	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- ask for, obtain, understand biographical information from others	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- get around by bus/train/taxi	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- act in social interactions (introductions/leave-taking)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- take and give simple telephone messages	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- assist others with no language ability with problems described above	.	...	....	.....	.....	.

	No exposure/no ability.	Not well at all, but I try.	Fairly well; I stumble and hesitate, but I can do it.	Very well; I seem to have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- describe my job in detail	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- provide information about my family, home/hometown	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- give brief autobiography and tell of my plans and hopes	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- speak of my experiences in my host family/ community/country	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- use systems of measurement of my language of study (distance/time/ weight) & express ideas	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- describe purpose/function of your program and/or organization	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- use the language to assist others with no language ability with problems described above	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- follow and contribute to conversation among native speakers	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- interact with group of educated native speakers	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- socialize with hosts without offending linguistically or culturally	.	...	....	.....	.....	.

I can --	No exposure/no ability.	Not well at all, but I try.	Fairly well; I stumble and hesitate, but I can do it.	Very well; I seem to have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
- take notes and summarize an informal discussion	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
. . . a formal lecture	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
I can talk about my experience with/impressions of various aspects of life in <u>my native country</u>. For example:						
- social relationships (family, friendship, taboos, etc.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- natural environment (climate, geography, resources, etc.)	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- man-made environment	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- population patterns	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- religious beliefs/practices	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- education	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- political organization	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- economy	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- art forms/public entertainment	.	...	....	.....	.....	.

	No exposure/no ability.	Not well at all, but I try.	Fairly well; I stumble and hesitate, but I can do it.	Very well; I seem to have little or no difficulty.	Almost like a native speaker.	Like a native speaker.
(Insert at least five additional topics on which to evaluate yourself.)						
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
I can obtain information about and discuss various aspects of life in my host country. (See examples above.)						
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
I can discuss in detail an area of special interest to me:						
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
- _____	.	...	....	.....	.....	.
I can interpret on any of the above topics. . .	.	...	....	.....	.....	.

Part III: Attitude Toward the Host Language and Culture

There are no specific goals to be reached in this section; rather, it is hoped that the process of answering these questions will help you to reflect on what your feelings and attitudes are, how/if they may be changing, and how/if they are affecting your learning.

	no exposure	not at all	some	a lot
1. I feel I am adjusting to the host culture				
2. My feelings toward host nationals are favorable				
3. I get along with my host family				
4. I try to be with host nationals				
5. I want to use the host language				
6. I use the host language				
7. I think I am accepted by host nationals				
8. I like being alone (no Americans) with host nationals				
9. I feel relaxed and comfortable in my new environment				
10. I would like to return to the host country				

Some things I appreciate about my host culture are:

Some things I find difficult to understand/accept about my host culture are:

Some contrasts I see between my host culture and my home culture are:

Footnotes

[1]Adapted from Theodore Gochenour and Anne Janeway, "Seven Concepts in Cross-Cultural Interaction," Beyond Experience (Brattleboro, Vermont: The Experiment Press, 1977) and from Nancy B. King, Case Study of a Latin American Sojourner: Crossing Hard Times Ph.D. Dissertation, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, 1981, University Microfilms Order No. 81-17076).

[2]Adapted from "An Evaluation Form of Communicative Competence for Language Learners," developed by Alvino E. Fantini, The Experiment in International Living, 1974.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Selections for People Who Like to Read

Here are some great novels about people in cross-cultural situations:

Chinua Achebe	Things Fall Apart
Elenore Bowen	Return to Laughter
James Clavell	Shogun
Margaret Craven	I Heard the Owl Call my Name
Robert Crichton	The Secret of Santa Vittoria
Gerald Durrell	My Family and Other Animals
Joseph Kessel	The Horsemen
Oscar Lewis	Children of Sanchez
Oscar Lewis	Five Families
Farley Mowat	The Boat That Wouldn't Float
Farley Mowat	Never Cry Wolf
Mary Lee Settle	Blood Ties

If you like science fiction, try:

Robert Heinlein	Stranger in a Strange Land
Frank Herbert	Dune
Ursula LeGuin	The Left Hand of Darkness

If you prefer non-fiction, we recommend:

Batchelder, Donald and Elizabeth G. Warner. Beyond Experience, The Experiment Press, Brattleboro, Vt, 1977.

Seymour Fersh. Learning About Peoples and Cultures. McDougal, Littell & Co., Evanston, Il. 1974.

Hall, Edward. The Silent Language.

_____. The Hidden Dimension.

L. Robert Kohls. Survival Kit for Overseas Living.

These sources can help you locate language materials and tapes:

Clearinghouse for Self-Instructional Language Materials. Center for Applied Linguistics, 3520 Prospect St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20007.

Johnson, Dora E. et al. A Survey of Materials for the Study of the Uncommonly Taught Languages. Center for Applied Linguistics, 3520 Prospect St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20007.

And these can help you work on your language learning:

Brewster, Elizabeth S. and Thomas E. Brewster. Language Acquisition Made Practical (Field Methods for Language Learners). Colorado Springs, Colorado: Lingua House, 1976.

Pimsleur, Paul. How to Learn a Foreign Language. Boston: Heinle and Heinle Publishers, Inc., 1980.

Rubin, Joan and Irene Thompson. How to Be a More Successful Language Learner. Heinle & Heinle Publishers, Inc., Boston, MA, 1982.

INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE SERIES:

GETTING THE WHOLE PICTURE

A Field Guide
to Language Acquisition and Culture Exploration

APPENDIX II: About the United States
(Social and Political Processes)

Supplement for International High School
Program Participants (IHSP)

The Experiment in International Living
Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

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APPENDIX II: About the United States
(Social and Political Processes)

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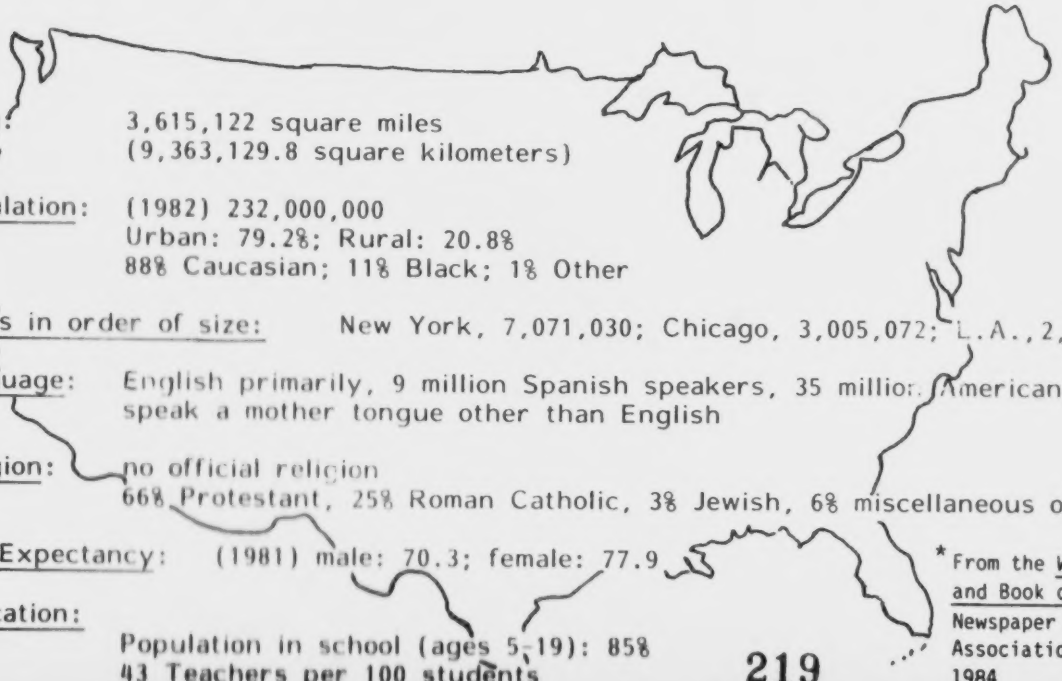
THE U.S.: SOME FACTS AND FIGURES*



Area: 3,615,122 square miles
(9,363,129.8 square kilometers)

Population: (1982) 232,000,000
Urban: 79.2%; Rural: 20.8%
88% Caucasian; 11% Black; 1% Other

Cities in order of size: New York, 7,071,030; Chicago, 3,005,072; L.A., 2,966,763

Language: English primarily, 9 million Spanish speakers, 35 million Americans who speak a mother tongue other than English

Religion: no official religion
66% Protestant, 25% Roman Catholic, 3% Jewish, 6% miscellaneous or none

Life Expectancy: (1981) male: 70.3; female: 77.9

Education:
Population in school (ages 5-19): 85%
43 Teachers per 100 students

* From the World Almanac and Book of Facts, Newspaper Enterprise Association, New York, 1984

HOW MANY STATES CAN YOU NAME?

Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri

Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Locate your homestay community

THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Some General Comments

Your homestay with an American family will provide you with a chance to get to know at least one family very well. You will then have a much greater insight into the operation and ties that hold many American families together. It is important to recognize, however, that family patterns vary from family to family, from region to region and among families of different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Many U.S. families consist primarily of the immediate family members, with relatives playing a lesser role than in many other cultures. For example, it is not common for parents to live with their married children. Relatives often live a long distance from one another, preventing frequent visits and communication, except by phone.

The immediate family members rely on one another for emotional and life support systems but may also turn to friends, government institutions, or even the symbolic value of material possessions to fulfill their needs for security and personal identity.

Although, traditionally, the father has been thought of as the head of the household, this is changing in some families as women are increasingly employed outside the home and are assuming more prominent positions in their work environment. The changing role of women has caused families to consider alternative ways to manage homes. Day-care centers are becoming a prominent feature of communities, and some fathers are assuming more responsibility for housework and child care. In addition, an increased divorce rate has made "single-parent" households increasingly common. The concept of a family is also

changing to reflect decisions of couples not to have children, to follow separate careers, or to remain single and relate intimately with a group of friends. The primary relation of family members is significantly enhanced by peers such as friends, acquaintances in work or school, or in the community.

Young people often participate in extra- or co-curricular activities at school such as sports, drama, and special interest clubs. Parents often contribute time and energy to volunteer organizations, public and private clubs such as Rotary International, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, American Association of University Women, fund-raising groups for philanthropic causes, YMCA, Girl/Boy Scouts, to name only a few. The "Volunteer Spirit" in the U.S. is perhaps vestigial of the original settlement need of this country to help one another to get settled and begin a new life. Although women have been the primary contributors to the various volunteer networks, their availability has lessened as they have moved more into the workplace.

Since the U.S. is a mixture of many cultures, races and peoples, the activities, holidays and general life patterns may be influenced by the ethnic as well as the "American" background of the family. This will be more apparent in recent immigrants to the U.S.

Holidays celebrated by most U.S. families include Thanksgiving, Christmas or Hanukkah, Easter or Passover, and the 4th of July. It is during these holidays, birthdays and anniversaries that families often join to celebrate the occasion. Festivities may differ from family to family but generally follow a tradition within the family, year after year. You will have an opportunity to participate in many of these occasions during your stay.

Families use their leisure time in different ways. Some gather around the television in the evenings; others may organize family outings on the weekends and plan family vacations together. Some families may use their leisure time in more individual ways. For example, family members may plan activities with their friends or peer groups and may attend summer camp. Young people may have jobs after school hours or during the summer to help support their education or personal incomes. Some people spend their free time involved in recreational activities that are organized by their church groups. The church can serve as more than a place to worship. This may be due to the historical place of the church within American society. A great majority of the early settlers came to the U.S. for religious freedom. Living was difficult and the church became a central meeting place where they found support.

The concept of friendship is more casual for Americans than for many other cultures. The word friend is used loosely and the "circle" of friends may change with age, moves, interests, and needs of the individuals. People may not see one another for quite some time and be able to resume their friendship with little difficulty. Americans tend to be very friendly to most people which is sometimes misinterpreted by others to mean more than is intended. For example, many exchange students to the U.S. are disappointed that people who appeared so friendly on the first day of school did not pursue a friendship in the way the exchange student had anticipated.

In understanding the American family, it may be helpful to consider some of the general values, attitudes, and beliefs held by many Americans. Remember that any attempt to generalize will not account for the numerous individual differences possible within any group.

In stereotyping the "American" the following characteristics have been applied:

informal	loud
friendly	wasteful
generous	uninformed about other countries
hard-working	wealthy
patriotic	boastful
time conscious	not class conscious

Adages help to identify values held by a culture. These adages help to evoke some basic American values:

Adage	Value
Don't cry over spilt milk	practicality
No rest for the wicked	work ethic
Time is money	importance of time
If at first you don't succeed, try, try again	persistence
A man's home is his castle	privacy

Other values often identified with the American culture include:

future orientation	originality
thriftiness	cleanliness
physical appearance	equality
pleasant appearance	responsibility
initiative	aggressiveness

As you investigate American social systems, you will find some of the above qualities exhibited to varying degrees. In understanding the values and particular attitudes of a people, their behavior and organization will make more sense.

Topics for Exploration

1 Visit a number of community organizations and talk with their members to discover:

A) The purpose of their organization

B) The history of their organization including how long it's been active in the community

C) Its role in the community

The following list can serve as a guideline to some of the associations commonly found in U.S. cities.

Service Clubs	Community Action Clubs
Rotary International	Food co-op
Kiwanis	League of Women Voters
Lions Club	PTA (Parent/Teacher Associations)
YMCA	
Hospital Auxiliary	Community Day-Care Center

Self-help Clubs

Jazzercise
Weight Watchers
Alcoholics Anonymous/Alanon

2 Attend a variety of religious services in your community. Talk with a member of the congregation or clergy about:

A) their religious beliefs
B) history of their religious group
C) role of their group in the community

The following list of religious groups can be investigated:

Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Unitarians, Lutherans, Catholics, Episcopalians, Jews, Mormons, Quakers, Christian Scientists, 7th Day Adventists, and Mennonites.

3 Visit a retirement community, Senior Citizens Center or a meeting of the local Association for the Advancement of Retired People (AARP). Interview a member of this group about:

A) how they feel about their lives after retirement

B) particular problems associated with retirement

C) the history of their association in the community

D) their roles in the community

THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

Some General Comments

Attending school will be a major part of your year abroad. Although high schools in the U.S. are probably different from those in your own country, most exchange students have little difficulty adjusting to and participating in school life.

Following are some points of information about the American high school system. The comments will apply generally to public schools in most areas, but keep in mind that there is also variation from school to school. This is more true than in most countries because American public education is not determined by any central government office, but rather at the state and community levels. You will find out more about the high school you will be attending once you have arrived in your host community.

1. The Students: High school students in the U.S. are not given complete responsibility for themselves. They are often supervised while at school, and their freedom to move about or leave the school building and campus is usually restricted.

2. Philosophy of Education: Whereas schools in most areas of the world place almost exclusive emphasis on academic study, U.S. schools stress "well-roundedness." This means that students are encouraged to develop non-academic skills and talents as well as intellectual abilities. Therefore, most high schools offer extra- or co-curricular activities--such as dramatic productions, sports, club activities, and social events--as well as

classroom instruction. You will be encouraged to participate in whatever activities you find interesting, and you should do so.

3. The Classroom: In some countries, teachers lecture in class and students spend a great deal of time studying or even memorizing textbooks. In the U.S., there may be more emphasis on applying knowledge in the real world, so teachers often engage their students in discussions, go on field trips, or use movies and educational games in the classroom. You may have to get used to participating actively in classroom activities rather than primarily listening and taking notes.

4. The Teachers: Teachers in U.S. schools are usually approachable and friendly rather than formal in their relationships with students. They expect respect, but are willing to get to know their students socially and personally. If you have any difficulties in your school, you can feel free to approach most teachers for individual assistance or for advice.

5. Homework and Examinations: Many exchange students are accustomed to major examinations given once or twice a year, for which they must study very hard. In the U.S., tests and "quizzes" are given more often, along with homework that may also be graded. Other assignments, such as book reports and term papers (long essays based on student research), are common. Grades are usually based not only on test scores, but also on homework assignments and participation in class. In both tests and homework, students are often asked to defend a personal opinion rather than to restate facts that they have learned from readings or lectures.

A Glossary of Terms

principal - the director of the school

guidance counselor - a person who advises students on which courses to take, career options, and helps students adjust socially

student council - the governing body of the school, composed of elected student representatives from all classes

freshmen - students in the 9th grade

sophomores - students in the 10th grade

juniors - students in the 11th grade

seniors - students in the 12th grade (the last year of high school)

semester - half of the school year

school year - September through June

mid-terms - exam which comes in the middle of the semester

finals - exam which comes at the end of each semester

pop quiz - a short test given unannounced by the teacher

electives - classes you choose to take

required subjects - classes you must take

assembly - a meeting of all students and teachers in the school

study hall - a period during the school day for students to do their homework

homeroom - a short period at the beginning of the day in which attendance is taken and announcements are given

period - a block of time, usually one hour or less, in which each class is given

to cut class - to miss class without permission

to skip school - to miss school without reason

to be suspended - to be asked to leave school for a period of time by the school authorities because of breaking a rule

to be expelled - to be asked to leave school permanently by school officials because of breaking rules

to flunk - to fail a class or grade

truant officer - a person whose job is to make sure all students attend school

extra-curricular - co-curricular activities--sports or clubs that students participate in after school

to try out - to audition for a sports team or for a drama or musical production; based on your ability, you may or may not be accepted

a prom - a dance usually held at the end of junior and senior year; often formal

vocational classes - special course for students who wish to work as soon as they finish high school. Some vocational classes include: typing, bookkeeping, automotive mechanics, drafting, printing, small machine repair, etc.

special ed - special education classes for students with learning disability problems

home ec - home Economics; classes that teach cooking, sewing, etc.

open campus - students may leave the school and grounds when they have no classes

smoking area - place where students can smoke

a pass - written permission to leave class to go elsewhere

locker - storage area for your coat and books

Topics for Exploration

1 Interview these people about their jobs. What does their position entail? What qualifications do they have to have for their jobs?

- guidance counselor
- school nurse
- a coach of a sports team
- a student council officer

Some other information you might try to find out: Does the school have any unique features that other U.S. schools do not usually have?

What input do the students in the school have in policy and curriculum?

What interscholastic activities take place with other schools in the area?

What community activities take place at the school?

2 Observe any differences between your school at home and your host school. What courses or activities are not offered at home? What rules or behavior are different in the classroom, the restrooms and at school functions (dances, sports events etc.)? What seems interesting or surprising to you?

3 Find out about the process of applying to a university in the U.S. What tests do you need to take? What does an application include? How much does it cost? Are there special classes for students who plan to go to the university?

4 How are public schools supported? Find out who supplies the books. Attend meetings of the Parents-Teachers' Association (P.T.A.) or school board to learn about issues concerning the school and the community. Investigate the government's relationship to public, private and religious schools. How is the curriculum developed? How is the school year schedule planned? Who decides and controls the ages of mandatory education? What are the qualifications for teachers and administrators? Who sets them? How are salaries set and adjusted?

A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

"America, thou half brother of the world, with something good and bad of every land."[1]

Philip Bailey, Poet, 1816-1902

Only 200 years old, the United States of America is a young country, and its people come from every region of the world. President John F. Kennedy, the great-grandson of a poor Irish immigrant, called America "a nation of immigrants."[2] He pointed out: "Every American who ever lived . . . was either an immigrant himself or a descendant of immigrants.[3] Even the American Indians were originally immigrants--descendants of Mongoloid peoples who came to the Western Hemisphere from Asia. The story of the United States is filled with the rich cultures of the various immigrant groups and their experiences of the new life they found in America, working to build a unique nation.

British Influences

During the 1500's, French and Spanish explorers visited the New World. But not until the 1600's did the first Europeans come to live in North America to seek freedom and a better life. Many of the immigrants were from Britain and they strongly influenced the early history of the new nation as reflected in its language, laws and philosophy of government.

Oscar Handlin, in his book The Uprooted, describes the experience of the immigrants:

> The crossing immediately subjected the emigrant to a succession of shattering shocks and decisively conditioned the life of every man that survived it. This was the initial contact with life as it was to be. For many peasants it was the first time away from home, away from the safety of the circumscribed little villages in which they had passed all their years. Now they would learn to have dealings with people essentially different from themselves. Now they would collide with unaccustomed problems, learn to understand alien ways and alien languages, manage to survive in a grossly foreign environment. [4]

Why did so many people leave their familiar homelands to come to a strange country? Said President Kennedy: "Three strong forces--religious persecution, political oppression and economic hardship--provided the chief motives for the mass migrations to our shores." [5]

Some British colonies were established as centers of trade. The North American continent was rich in natural resources and the British had factories which needed raw materials. The trading of raw materials and finished products became important to both the British and the Americans.

The British who were having trouble in England because of their beliefs came to America to find religious freedom. One of these groups, the Puritans, believed that God had led them to America to build a religious nation. Their religious beliefs helped them when life was difficult in the new land.

The First Americans

When the colonists arrived in North America, they did not find an empty land. The Native American Indians were already living in the area. When Christopher Columbus came to America in 1492, he named them "Indians," because he thought he had gone all the way around the world and had reached India. Today they are called "Native Americans."

America was settled several thousand years before Columbus by Asiatic peoples who crossed a land on an ice bridge from Siberia to Alaska and then spread slowly over the continent.

The descendants of these immigrants were the American Indians whom the European explorers found long-established in the "new world."

The Native Americans were not strong enough to prevent Europeans from settling in North America. When colonies were established on the east coast, the Native Americans began moving westward. Then immigrants began coming to the new land in large numbers, and as the white settlers moved westward they took the Native American land as they went. The Native Americans pushed farther and farther west. Some Native Americans fought against the immigrants, but the immigrants had an advantage with their guns and large number of soldiers.

By the end of the 1800's, the Native Americans had been defeated. Reservations were established for them where they could live as autonomous groups. It was not until the 1930's that citizenship was conferred upon the Native Americans.

Afro-Americans

Another group which had an important influence on America is the black Afro-American. Many Africans

were brought to America and sold as slaves from 1619 to 1807. They were not freed until the end of the Civil War in 1865. Most of them worked on large farms in the South. After they were freed, many of the Black Americans continued to live in the South. In 1900, 90% of them were still living in the South, and many of them still worked for the same white people who had named them or their ancestors before the Civil War. After 1900 they began to leave the South and by 1960, 50% of the Blacks had moved North and West taking with them their special music, art, and religion. In recent years, they have taken a more active role in American life than their ancestors. They now represent 12% of the American population. [6]

The Civil War brought many changes in American life. The slaves were freed and industry began to grow. More and more people were needed to work in the new factories.

Later Immigrants

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

Emma Lazarus, 1885
written for the Statue of Liberty

New immigrants, mostly from Europe, came in large numbers in the late 1800's and early 1900's and the population grew quickly. In search of freedom and a better life, they caused many changes in American society. Many of them settled in the eastern industrial cities, bringing their customs and their religions with them.

At the same time, but on the west coast, Asians came to work on farms and helped build the new railroads across the country. Their first years in America were often difficult ones, but many of them remained and became successful in business.

A recent large group of immigrants is the Latin Americans. Most of them have come from Mexico, Cuba and Central America. Other Latins have come in large numbers from Puerto Rico which is a Commonwealth of the United States. These people have settled in large numbers in the Southwest, Florida, and New York City and their presence has lent a new flair to such areas.

In addition to the immigrant population, there have been increasing numbers of refugees coming to the U.S. since World War II. The United Nations defines a refugee as ". . . anyone who must leave his native country out of reasonable fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality or affiliation with a social or political group." Unlike immigrants, refugees have been forced to leave their countries.

The largest number of recent refugees has come from Southeast Asia. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, "boat people" fled Vietnam in small boats. Large numbers of refugees also came out of Laos and Cambodia, all fleeing the Communist governments in their native countries. Many western countries have helped to resettle these refugees, with the U.S. accepting the largest numbers. Other refugee groups now coming to the U.S. include those from Eastern Europe, Russia, Afghanistan, Africa (especially Ethiopia), and Latin America (especially Cuba). As with the immigrants, refugees have resettled throughout the U.S. and are now beginning to adjust to their new lives. While learning English and becoming part of the work force, these individuals have also brought a variety of new languages and cultures to the changing social scene within the United States.

The mixing of so many diverse people from different nations has sometimes caused trouble in America. Blacks have not been completely accepted in white society. And at times there have been anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish groups. At times when many immigrants arrived all at once, American workers feared there would not be enough jobs for everyone. There have now been some efforts to control immigration and today there are many laws limiting the number of those who may enter in any one year.

Eventually, new arrivals are accepted and most have taken an active role in American life. Each nationality has brought something new and special. For a long time many people believed that these different nationalities would eventually mix together completely. It was thought that America would become a great "melting pot" and that all of the different nationalities would melt together to form a new race; that the old races of the world would form one new "American" race. But so far this has not happened and there are still racial and cultural differences.

On all American coins there are the words "E Pluribus Unum" which mean "out of many--one." When the United States was established this was chosen as a motto, but America has not proved to be the great melting pot which some people expected. Still, it remains true that out of many races and nationalities has come one nation, while cultural pluralism has become a more realistic concept for American society. Today, the United States is one of the most multi-cultural, multi-lingual countries in the world.

Topics for Exploration

1 Through your research at the local library or by talking with local or state officials (if possible) find out:

- How is immigration from various countries controlled and managed?
- What has been the history of various immigrant groups in the host country? Your own?
- How are immigrants of today accepted/rejected by the larger society?
- What social/political/religious/educational issues are raised by the influx of large numbers of one immigrant group to a particular area?
- Can you make comparisons between immigrant presence and influence in the host country and in your home country?

2 What are the requirements and procedures for becoming a citizen in the host culture?

- How do they compare with naturalization procedures in your own country?

3 Investigate ethnic groups found in the community, Polish-American clubs etc.? What role do these groups play in the community? Do they celebrate any festivals you might attend?

4 Check through your local church to see if they have sponsored any refugee families living in the area. Interview a member of the family for your school paper. How have his/her expectations of life in the U.S. matched the reality?

Footnotes

[1] James Baker and Mary Ann Kearney, Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness (Rowley, Mass: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1978).

[2] John F. Kennedy, A Nation of Immigrants (New York, New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (Boston, Mass: Little, Brown & Co., 1973).

[5] John F. Kennedy, A Nation of Immigrants (New York, New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

[6] James Baker and Mary Ann Kearney, Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness (Rowley, Mass: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1978).

THE U.S. POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Constitution

> "We the people of the United States in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."
> Preamble to the U.S. Constitution

Popular sovereignty is the basis of the American political system and its most fundamental feature is the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution was written in 1787 by men like Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and Benjamin Franklin. These early statesmen, free at last from the whims of English kings and queens, felt that people should be guaranteed the right to elect and control their public officials. To critics of this democratic thinking, Thomas Jefferson replied,

> "Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question. . . . The way to have good and safe government, is not to trust it all to one, but to divide it among the many." 2

How does the Constitution they wrote describe the system of federal government and what rights and freedoms are guaranteed by

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The Constitution outlines three distinct branches of the national government, each of which serves to check and balance the others. They are: 1) the legislative branch, or Congress; 2) the executive branch, and 3) the judicial branch.

The Congress

Congress is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Together they make new laws, change old laws, and investigate matters of national interest. Other duties of Congress include: providing for defense and general welfare; declaring war; ordering currency made and borrowing money; adjusting federal taxes; regulating inter-state commerce; determining who can become a citizen; and admitting new states.

The House of Representatives has 435 representatives. The number from each state is based on the population in the state. Representatives are elected every 2 years by voters in a district in state and may be re-elected. Representatives propose ways to raise money; elect a President if no candidate has a majority of electoral votes; and accuse government officials of crimes in office (impeachment).

The Senate is composed of 100 Senators, 2 from each state. They are elected for 6 years and may be re-elected. The presiding officer is the Vice President of the United States. Senators approve treaties; elect a Vice President if no candidate receives a majority of electoral votes; hold trial of government officials accused of crimes by the House of Representatives; and confirm or refuse to confirm officials appointed by the President.

How does Congress work? A bill (proposed law) must be approved by both the Senate and the House

and signed by the President before it becomes a law. If the President disapproves, the Senate and the House each by 2/3 vote may over-ride this veto.

Each of the two chambers divides its work into committees. There are 16 regular or standing committees in the Senate and 21 in the House. These committees meet to make new laws or to change old laws. Committee hearings are held in Washington, D.C. and in other parts of the United States. A committee then reports its recommendations to its chamber of Congress. If approved, the same process must take place in the other chamber of Congress.

Many changes are often made before a bill becomes a law. The money necessary to pay for programs and services is appropriated in the same way a law is enacted.

Senators and Representatives usually belong to one of the two major political parties, Republican or Democratic. In each chamber, the party with the most members selects the leaders: the Speaker of the House, the President protempore of the Senate and the heads of committees.[2]

The Executive Branch

The executive branch is made up of the President, Vice President and Cabinet (advisors) and enforces the law.

The President must be at least 35 years old and must be born a citizen of the United States. He/she must have lived at least 14 years in the United States; the President is elected every four years (and may be re-elected only once) to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and to administer the laws made by Congress.

The President conducts relations with foreign governments; commands the Army, Navy and Air Force and is responsible for the security and defense of the United States; suggests legislation to Congress, including a budget; reports to Congress and may call special sessions of Congress (but may not dismiss Congress); approves or vetoes laws proposed by Congress; pardons a person convicted under a federal law or orders a delay in a punishment; appoints personal assistants, counselors, advisors, and commissions who report directly to him/her and are responsible only to the President; and issues executive orders (which do not need the approval of Congress) in matters of administration.

With Senate approval, the President makes treaties with other countries and international groups; appoints ambassadors, federal judges, military officers, heads of executive departments (the Cabinet) and other high officials, and the mayor and city council of the District of Columbia.

The Vice President must have the same qualifications as the President and is elected at the same time and with the President. The Vice President is the presiding officer (President) of the Senate but votes only if the Senators are equally divided. S/He assists the President in whatever way the President asks. If the President dies or cannot serve, the Vice President becomes President for the remainder of the terms of office.

The President's Cabinet are chief officials of the executive departments (in many other countries these would be ministries) and are called Secretaries, except the Secretary of Justice who is the Attorney General. They are appointed by the President with approval of the Senate, they may not hold any elected office, such as Senator or Governor. By custom, they are usually of the same political party as the President and serve as long as the President desires.

They do not act as a group but advise the President and supervise the approximately 3 million employees of the federal government departments. Listed in the order of when they were established, the executive departments are: State (foreign affairs), Treasury, Defense, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health Education and Welfare, Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation.[2]

The Judicial Branch

The judicial branch is made up of the courts system, which interprets the laws. These include: the Supreme Court and two other groups of federal courts; the U.S. District Courts and the U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeals. There are in the federal courts approximately 500 judges, appointed for life by the President with approval of the Senate.

The President and Vice President are not elected by popular vote but by electoral votes. Under this somewhat cumbersome and archaic system, when a citizen casts his/her vote for a presidential candidate, s/he really chooses an elector. These electors are expected to vote for the candidate who wins the most votes (but it is not mandatory that they do so). The candidate who wins the most votes in each state receives all the electoral votes of that state, the same number as the number of U.S. Senators and Representatives from that state. To win, a candidate must receive 270 electoral votes of the total 538, rather than the largest number of votes of all who voted.

To vote, a citizen must be at least 18 years old, conform to state laws and be a bona-fide resident of a village, town, city or county.

S/he must register in person (or by mail in some states) with election officials of local govern-

ment; go to a polling place on election day and mark (in private by hand or by machine) the paper on which a voter votes. In many states, if a voter will be away at the time of the election, voting may be by absentee ballot. There is no legal obligation to vote. [2]

The Bill of Rights and Constitutional Amendments

One of the most significant parts of the Constitution is the Bill of Rights which is comprised of the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution. These guarantee certain rights to all American citizens. The first amendment assures the freedom of religion, speech, the press and the right of peaceful assembly.

The 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th Amendments protect anyone suspected or accused of a crime. They protect citizens from search and seizure by the police and dictate that evidence gained by unlawful search cannot be used in court. The 5th Amendment states that no person has to give evidence against themselves and that no one will be deprived of "life, liberty or property without due process of law."

The 6th amendment assures a public trial by an impartial jury ; a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty. The 8th prohibits excessive bail or fines and cruel and unusual punishments.

The Constitution is now almost 200 years old. In the intervening years since its inception, only 16 new amendments have been added.

It has seen the country through numerous wars and crises; through great geographical expansion and population growth; through the influx of a variety of immigrant groups and a change from a rural to industrialized society. Still the political system outlined in it has shown that a government "of the

people, by the people, and for the people" can work for the general welfare of all its citizens.

Topics for Exploration

1 From a library, or with the help of your family, find copies of the basic constitution or laws governing the U.S.A. (the Constitution and the Bill of Rights). Read and try to understand them, eliciting help as needed.

- What citizen rights and responsibilities are covered by each?
- What examples of the above rights and responsibilities do you see in the everyday life of family and community?

2 To compare and contrast the governmental structure of your own country with that of the U.S., make charts showing the various elected officials and bodies (House, Senate, etc.), their major functions, terms of office, possibilities of re-election and any other points of interest to you.

3 How many political parties are there in your host community/state/country?

- What are their names?
- What does each stand for (what are the party platforms)?
- Which party (parties) seem(s) to dominate in your host community? Can you find out why?
- How are candidates for office selected to represent a party?
- How does this organization of issues and candidates compare with that of your own country?

4 Try to determine who seems to be most active/interested politically in your community--any particular individuals, professions, economic/social/ethnic/church groups, educational levels, men or women?

- Do the political candidates come primarily from any of these groups?

5 What are the mechanics of an election in the U.S.?

Try to go to the polls (voting place) with a member of your family on election day.

- What happens?
- How is a vote cast and counted?
- What measures are taken to assure privacy? To prevent fraudulent practices such as "ballot stuffing?"
- How and how soon are the election results reported?
- How are national election results tallied and reported?
- Who can vote?
- Of those who are eligible to vote, what percent actually do?
- Compare local, state and national statistics; particular years; particular issues, etc.

6 What is the age of majority in your country and how does it compare with that of the U.S.?

- What responsibilities and rights does it bring in each? (voting eligibility, military service, legal responsibility, driving privileges, permission to consume alcoholic beverages . . . etc.)

- How and at what government level is the age of majority determined?

- How do people of different socio-economic, religious, ethnic and age groups seem to feel about these laws and their incumbent implications?

7 Investigate the Court System in your community. What are the various levels of crime and typical punishments for each?

- Is a defendant considered innocent or guilty until proven otherwise?

- What kinds of problems can be settled out of court and which almost always require a trial?

- What recourses does a defendant or plaintiff have if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome of a trial?

8 Compare and contrast military service between your own country and the U.S. Try to understand how/why each system works in its given context.

- What branches of military service exist? (Army, Navy, Air Force, etc.)

- Is service voluntary, obligatory or both?

9 As you have conducted this research, have you found people generally open, interested in talking about politics? Or closed and reluctant? Have particular groups seemed more or less so?

Footnotes

[1]Padover, Saul K. The Genius of America, McGraw-Hill: New York, 1960, p. 63.

[2]Adapted from "Government of the U.S.A." Francis S. McClintock, ed. Washington, D.C.: Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters, 1973 and The World Almanac, 1984.

SOME HELPFUL READINGS

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"There is a flickering
spark in us all
which, if struck at
just the right age...
can light the rest of
our lives, elevating our
ideals, deepening our
tolerance, and
sharpening our appetite
for knowledge about
the rest of the
world. Education and
cultural exchanges,
especially among our
young, provide a
perfect opportunity for
this precious spark to
grow, making us more
sensitive and wiser
international citizens
throughout our careers."

President Reagan

May 24, 1982

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IN
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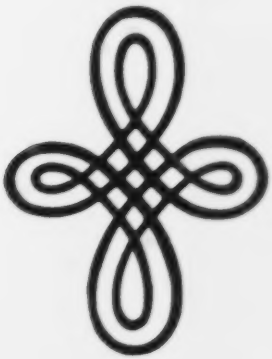

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